

OUR MASTER, THE ARRANGER OF THE RATIB,
IMAM ‘ABDULLAH BIN ‘ALAWI AL-HADDAD, SAID IN HIS BOOK
ENTITLED “THE BOOK OF ASSISTANCE”;

*“Every believer should protect his beliefs by learning the
creed of one of the leading scholars, about whose dignity
and firm establishment in scholarship no differences exist.”*



الْوَصَايَا النَّافِعَةُ

Al Waṣāyā al Nāfi‘ah

BENEFICIAL COUNSELS

Imam al-Haddad

*al-Hadhrāmī, al-Shafīī, al-Hussainī
May Allah, the Exalted Have Mercy Upon Him*



لِمَقَامِ الْإِمَامِ الْحَدَّادِ
تَرْجُومَةُ
الْحَاوِي
ت: ١٥٩٤٤
بِرَبِّهِ قَائِمٌ لَا يَنْقُصُ إِلَّا الْمَوْتُ وَتُشْكِرُ

AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

الْوَصَايَا النَّافِعَةُ

Al Wasaya an-nafi'ah.

Beneficial Religious Counsels

Imam Al-Haddad

al-Hadhrami, al-Shafii, al-Hussaini

May Allah, the Exalted Have Mercy Upon Him

لِلْإِمَامِ الْحَدَّادِ

الْحَضْرَمِيِّ الشَّافِعِيِّ الْحُسَيْنِيِّ

رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى



An English Translation

الْوَصَايَا النَّافِعَةُ

لِلْإِمَامِ شَيْخِ الْإِسْلَامِ قُطْبِ الدَّعْوَةِ وَالْإِرْشَادِ
الْحَبِيبِ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَلَوِي الْحَدَّادِ
الْحَضْرَمِيِّ الشَّافِعِيِّ الْحُسَيْنِيِّ
رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى

Beneficial Religious Counsels

By the Imam, al-Sheikh of Islam,
the Pivot of Dakwah, the Guiding Light
the Beloved Abdullah bin Alawi Al-Haddad
al-Hadhrami, al-Shafii, al-Hussaini
May Allah, the Exalted have mercy upon him

An English Translation

Imam Al-Haddad's manuscripts were
recompiled into books by Habib Ali
bin Isa bin Abdulkader Al-Haddad.
They were subsequently re-edited,
reprinted, translated and distributed
by various inspired parties.

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ISBN: 978 – 981 – 05 – 8656 – 0

Maqam Al-Imam Al-Haddad
Hawi Tarim Hadhramut
Charity of Habib Esa bin Abdulkader bin Ahmad Al-Haddad

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A Short Biography of Imam Al-Haddad

In the Name of Allah Most Merciful Most Gracious

He is Al-Imam Al-Habib Abdullah bin Alawi Bin Muhammad Al-Haddad, the famous Imam, the shaykh of Islam, the foremost of the people unification, the noble descendant of the Prophet, Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, a descendant of Al-Imam Hussein, may Allah be pleased with him the shaykh Abdullah ibn Alawi Al-Haddad Al-Alawi, may Allah reward him for us with the best rewards He gives those of His people who guide us to Him.

He was born in Subair, a small suburb in Tarim, Hadhramaut, South Yemen, on the night 5 Safar 1044 after Hijrah. Tarim was already a centre of the learned Asyraf of the descendant of Saiyidina Hussein bin Ali bin Abu Talib. He grew up in an enlightened environment. He was raised and educated there, initially taught by his father and was never seen to show the recklessness of other children. He lost his eyesight while still young and was granted the power of discernment as compensation. He gathered as he grew, the best of knowledge and spirituality, and became outstanding in knowledge, guidance, calling people to Allah, and being a shaykh in the perfect sense of the word. He was given the title Pole of Guidance [*Qutbul Irshad*] by the greatest of the people of knowledge in his time and thereafter until today.

Some have said that there were three ranks in calling to Allah, according to whether it was done by pen, tongue or foot (travelling). All three were combined to perfection in the works of Imam Al-Haddad, may Allah shower His mercy upon him. His books are still in print in Egypt, India, Hijaz, Istanbul, and Java. His fame spread throughout the Muslim world, and his writings which were based on the Quran and the practices of the Prophet [*Sunnah*] were never criticised nor thought to be controversial.

His roots from the Prophet Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace upon him, from Fatima Az-Zahraa, daughter of Muhammad and Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib, Gate to (The Radiant) the City of Knowledge, may Allah be pleased with him and all his descendants.

Then on from Al-Imam Hussein > Imam Ali Zainal Abidin > Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir > Imam Jaafar As-Saadiq > Imam Ali Al-Uraidhi > Imam Muhammad An-Naqib > Isa Ar-Rumi > Ahmad Al-Muhajir illa Allah > Ubaidillah > Alawi > Muhammad > Alawi > Ali Khali' Qassam > Muhammad of Mirbat > Alawi > Abdur Rahman > Ahmad Al-Faqih > Abdullah > Muhammad > Ahmad > Abu Bakr At-Tawil > Ahmad Al-Haddad > Alawi > Muhammad > Abdullah > Ahmad > Muhammad > Alawi > Abdullah Qutbul Irshad

He earnestly sought knowledge, accompanying such scholars as:

1. al-Habib Umar bin Abdul Rahman Al-Attas
2. al-Habib Oukail bin Abdurrahman As-Saqqaf
3. al-Habib Abdurrahman bin Syaikh Aideed
4. al-Habib Sahl Bin Ahmed Bahasan Al-Hadeely Baalwi
5. as-Saeed Muhammad Bin Alwi As-Saqqaf

Amongst his students are:

1. His son, our leader al-Habib Hassan bin Abdullah Al-Haddad.
2. al-Habib Ahmad bin Zain Al-Habshee
3. al-Habib Abdurrahman bin Abdullah Bilfaqeh
4. al-Habib Muhammad bin Zain bin Semait
al-Habib Umar bin Zain bin Semait
5. al-Habib Umar bin Abdurrahman Al-Bar
6. al-Habib Ali bin Abdullah bin Abdurrahman As-Saqqaf
7. al-Habib Muhammad bin Umar bin Taha As-Safi As-Saqqaf and many others.

It seems as he was selected to carry out the mission of dakwah for Islam and spiritual guidance using wit and wisdom. People eventually entirely attended to him, and his name has become popular.

People from different fields of life benefited from his books, preaches and guidance. His missions received people's approval and love. His publications have been translated into English, Malay, French and other languages. He passed away on the evening of Tuesday, 7 Dzulqaedah 1132 Hijrah and buried in a simple grave at the graveyard of Zanbal in Tarim. May Allah show mercy on him and reward him abundantly.

His publications are distinctively popular among the old and young then and till now. They include the following:

١. النَّصَائِحُ الدِّينِيَّةُ وَالْوَصَايَا الْإِيمَانِيَّةُ.

An Nasaih id-Diniyya wal Wasaya al-Imaniyyah.

1. Sincere Religious Advices and Recommendations of the Iman.

٢. الدَّعْوَةُ النَّامَّةُ وَالتَّذْكِرَةُ الْعَامَّةُ.

Ad-Da'watut-Taammah wat-Tadhkiratul 'Aammah.

2. Perfect Summons and General Admonition.

٣. رِسَالَةُ الْمَعَاوَنَةِ وَالْمُظَاهَرَةِ وَالْمُؤَاوَزَةِ لِلرَّاعِبِينَ مِنْ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي سُلُوكِ طَرِيقِ الْآخِرَةِ.

Risalatul Mu'awanah wal Muzhaharah wal Mu'azarah Lir-Raagibeen Minal Mu'mineen Fee Suluki Tariq-al-Akhirah.

3. The Book of Assistance, Support and Encouragement for Such Believers as Desire to Follow the Way of the Afterlife.

٤. الْفُصُولُ الْعِلْمِيَّةُ وَالْأُصُولُ الْحِكْمِيَّةُ.

Al-Fusul ul-'Ilmiyyah wal Usul ul-Hikamiyyah.

4. Knowledge and the Principles of Wisdom.

٥. سَبِيلُ الْإِذْكَارِ وَالْإِعْتِبَارِ بِمَا يَمُرُّ بِالْإِنْسَانِ وَيَنْقُضِي لَهُ مِنَ الْأَعْمَارِ.
Sabilul-Iddhikaar wal-I'tibaar Bima Yamurru bil-Insan Wa Yanqadhee Lahu Minal A'maar.
 5. The Way to Remember and Learn from the Lives of Man that Wane and Perish.
٦. رِسَالَةُ الْمَذَاكِرَةِ مَعَ الْإِخْوَانِ الْمُحِبِّينَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْخَيْرِ وَالْدِّينِ.
Risalatul Muzhaakarah Ma'al-Ikhwaanil-Muhibbeen Min Ahlil Khayr Waddeen.
 6. A Discussion Among Brothers and the Loved Ones From Among the Righteous in Good Deeds and Faith.
٧. رِسَالَةُ آدَابِ سُلُوكِ الْمُرِيدِ.
Rislatu Aadaabi Suluk il-Murid.
 7. The Book of Discipline in the Path of the Seeker [Murid]
٨. كِتَابُ الْحِكَمِ.
Kitaabul Hikam.
 8. Book of Wisdom.
٩. النَّفَائِسُ الْعَلَوِيَّةُ فِي الْمَسَائِلِ الصُّوفِيَّةِ.
An-Nafaais-il Alawiyyah fil Masaail-as-Sufiyyah.
 9. The Gems of the Alawiyya Concerning Sufism.
١٠. إِثْحَافُ السَّائِلِ بِجَوَابِ الْمَسَائِلِ.
Ithaaf is-Saail bi-Jawabil Masaail.
 10. The Gifts for the Seeker Being Some Answered Questions.
١١. الْوَصَايَا النَّافِعَةُ.
Al Wasaya an-nafi'ah.
 11. Beneficial Religious Counsels.

١٢ . وَسِيْلَةُ الْعِبَادِ إِلَى زَادِ الْمَعَادِ .

Waseelatul 'Ibaad Ilaa Zaadil Ma'aad.

12. A Means for People to Provide for the Hereafter. (A Compilation of the Imam Azkaar and Awraad, including *Wird Latif, Wird Kabir, Ratib al-Shahir, Hizbul-Fath* and *Hizbun-Nasr* by Habib Muhamad bin Alawi Al- Haddad).

١٣ . الدُّرُّ الْمَنْظُومُ لِدَوِي الْعُقُولِ وَالْفُهُومِ .

Ad-Durrul Mandhum Li zawil 'Uqul Wal Fuhum.

13. Poetic Pearls for Discerning and Understanding Minds.
This is his *Diwan*, the best of his *Qaseedas*.

١٤ . تَثْبِيْتُ الْقُوَادِ - بِذِكْرِ كَالِمِ مَجَالِسِ .

Tathbitul fu'ad bizikir kalam majilis.

14. Affirming of the Hearts - with Remembrance of the Speeches at Majlis Volume I and Volume II.

١٥ . مُكَاتِّبَاتُ الْإِمَامِ الْحَدَّادِ .

Mukatibat Al-Imam Al-Haddad.

15. Correspondences of Imam Al-Haddad.

Most of Imam Al-Haddad's manuscripts were recompiled by Habib Ali bin Isa bin Abdulkader Al-Haddad, who was born in Singapore and educated in Tarim. They were subsequently re-edited, reprinted, translated and distributed by various inspired parties.

Scholars, as well as the laymen, so highly admired the works that they would read them repeatedly. These scholarly works have also been described as a summary of the quintessence of Scholar Ghazali's literature and eventually indispensable as being brief, but comprehensive.

Introduction

﴿سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾

“Transcendent are You! We have knowledge only of what You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing and All-Wise¹”.

All praise be to Allah, the Lord of Creation, Who addressed His call and counsel to all His slaves generally and selected some of them to receive guidance and mercy, subjugating all this to His eternal Will. Allah the Exalted says

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنْ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ.

“Verily, We have commanded those who were given the Scripture before you, and We command you, to have *taqwa*² of Allah³”.

He, the Exalted says:

وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ.

“But Allah does call (everyone) to the Home of Peace: He guides whomever He please to a way that is straight.”⁴

He, the Exalted says,

يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ.

“For His Mercy, He specially chooses whom He pleases; for Allah is the Lord of infinite bounties.”⁵

May Allah’s blessings and peace be upon our master Muhammad and upon his Family and Companions, the protectors of the upright religion.

¹ Surah 2 Baqarah Verse 32.

² *Taqwa* is sometimes translated as ‘fear.’ In fact it should be expanded to ‘minding one’s duty to Allah’.

³ Surah 4 An-Nisaa Verse 131.

⁴ Surah 10 Yunus Verse 25.

⁵ Surah 3 Aali Imran Verse 74.

Thereafter, may Allah's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you, O beloved brother and aspiring seeker, and upon every brother in religion on the same path, and upon all those that love us for the sake of Allah, Lord of the Worlds, in the East and West, on land and sea, in both flat and rugged areas, and all regions and corners of the earth.

You asked me, my beloved brother, to write a counsel for you that you would find comfort in and hold fast to, and I have responded to your request, although I am not worthy of doing so. In your making this request and in my assisting you in fulfilling it, we have before us the beautiful example of the rightly guided predecessors [*salaf saleh*], and those successors who followed their example, may Allah be well pleased with them all.

Indeed, both seeking and giving counsel were among their practices and qualities. Allah has described them as such in His Praiseworthy Book, which is:

لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبُطْلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ.

“No falsehood can approach it from before or behind it: It is sent down by One Most Wise of Wisdom, Worthy of all Praise.”¹

So seek this quality there, and you will find it clearly in these two sūrahs: The City [*al-Balad*] and The Fading Day [*al-ʿAsr*]². And thus be guided by Allah, seek His assistance (from the Quran) to do the right act of worship, properly guide and using the right tools.

﴿وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ﴾

There is no might or power except with Allah
The Most High and the Supreme in Glory

¹ Surah 41 Fussilat Verse 42.

² Surah 90 al-Balad Verse 17. “Then will he be of those who believe, and enjoin patience, (constancy, and self-restraint), and enjoin deeds of kindness and compassion.” And in Surah Al-ʿAsr 103 Verse 3 “Except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy.”

Chapter One

Levels and Fruits of *Taqwa*

You should know that the most worthy thing to be mentioned in any counsel first is to have *taqwa* of Allah, the Exalted, Mighty, and Wise. Therefore, I counsel you, myself, and all believers and Muslims to have *taqwa* of Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, for it is how one attains the good of both abodes, and it is the foundation upon which one firmly builds one's religion. If the foundation is not reliable, then building upon it is more likely to lead to collapse than to completion.

Taqwa is of different levels. The first level is to avoid disobedience and illicit things, and this is an obligation [*fard*]. The second level is to avoid doubtful matters, and this is painstaking scrupulousness [*wara'*]. The third level is to avoid excessive indulgence in permissible things. By this, I mean those things which are only used for fulfilling one's desires. *Taqwa* regarding this is considered real abstinence [*zuhd*] if one feels comfort and enthusiasm while abstaining from these things, whereas it is forced abstinence [*tazahhud*] if one finds it difficult to abstain from them and must strive to do so. If a person avoids something for the sake of other people, or out of fear of them, or desiring something from them, then he has *taqwa* of them and does not have *taqwa* of Allah. The one who has *taqwa* of Allah is one who is mindful of Him, seeking His good pleasure, desiring His reward and fearing His punishment.

Whoever masters the station [*maqam*] of *taqwa* becomes worthy of receiving bequeathed knowledge, and is called the direct knowledge [*'ilm ladunni*] which Allah the Exalted casts into the hearts of His chosen slaves, which cannot be contained in books and cannot be attained

through study. Allah has withheld this knowledge from those who are subservient to their lower selves [*nafs*].

They are those with darkened souls, who are obsessed with cultivating their desires for food, sexual gratification, and clothing. Allah the Exalted alludes to this direct knowledge when He says:

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللَّهُ.

“Have *taqwa* of Allah, and Allah will teach you.”¹

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah blessings and peace be upon him said:

مَنْ عَمِلَ بِمَا عَلِمَ أَوْرَثَهُ اللَّهُ عِلْمَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ.

“If someone acts upon his knowledge, Allah will bestow upon him knowledge which he did not previously possess.”

The above action is the fruit of acting upon knowledge derived from the Book and the *Sunnah* and of *taqwa*, uncontaminated by the lower self [*nafs*], whims and fancy [*hawa*], from seeking other than Allah, and making claims of piety.

The slave is not ready to receive this divine outpouring [*fiyāḍ*] without engaging in spiritual striving, which cuts off the roots of desire while maintaining unceasing focus upon Allah in the outward forms of worship. Clarifying this point requires a further explanation which we will undertake in some of our other works.

¹ Surah 2 Baqarah Verse 282.

Chapter Two

Seeking Knowledge

I counsel you to avidly seek beneficial knowledge through studying, reading, reviewing, and researching. Do not allow laziness or boredom to cause you to stop seeking knowledge, nor the fear that you will not act upon it, for that is foolishness.

You must seek knowledge with a sound intention, and you must scrutinise your lower self to ascertain whether it is sound. Do not be convinced by its claims until you examine it, test it and force it to act upon what it has learned. You must then teach what you have learned to those who do not know whether they ask to be shown or not. If the Devil says to you, “Do not teach others until you become a scholar,” then say, “In regards to what I have learned, I am knowledgeable of that. Therefore, it is obligatory for me to teach it to others. As for those things I do not know, it is obligatory for me to learn them.” The opinion applies in regards to obligatory knowledge. In addition to this, learning and teaching supplementary knowledge is a supreme act of worship which brings one nearer to Allah, if one’s intention is sound. For it to be rational, one must only teach seeking the countenance of Allah and the Abode of the Hereafter, and not for status or wealth or anything else.

You must regularly read and reflect upon the books of the masters of the spiritual path, for therein is guidance to the unique knowledge of Allah, advice on rectifying your intention so that all your actions are performed solely for Allah, refinement of the soul, and other beneficial knowledge that leads one towards salvation and success. No one refrains from reading and studying these books except one whose insight is blinded and whose heart is darkened.

If you do not have enough time to undertake a general reading of these books, then focus on the books of Imam al-Ghazali for they are the most beneficial, comprehensive and unique.

I counsel you to have a present heart and submissive limbs in all your acts of worship. Through this, you will attain the fruits of those acts and their light will pour upon you. I also counsel you to be conscious of Allah in every state. Your heart should unceasingly be aware that He is watching you and is near you.

Remind and admonish your lower self, and call it to the way of your Lord with wisdom and excellent teaching. Acquaint it with the reward, eternal bliss, honour, elevation, and great fortune it will gain through obedience. Acquaint it also with the painful torment and great shame that it will receive by abandoning obedience and committing acts of disobedience. Indeed, the lower self, due to its ignorance, hardly ever does something or refrains from doing something unless it is motivated by hope or fear. Its nature is to avoid acts of obedience out of laziness and to incline towards acts of disobedience.

I counsel you to spend your every moment and every breath in doing something which will benefit you in the hereafter, or in your livelihood which will then assist you in the hereafter.

Chapter Three

Signs of a Sound Heart

I counsel you to rectify your heart and to monitor it continuously, for it is the commander of the limbs: whether the limbs are rectified or corrupted is determined by whether the soul is rectified or corrupted. The heart is where the knowledge of Allah [*ma'rifah*], the pinnacle and most noble of all knowledge, resides. And the heart is where the intentions are formed, which is the starting point and basis of all actions.

The heart has hearing and sight through which it may distinguish between truth and falsehood. It cannot do so, however, until it is purified from the filth of false beliefs and base character traits, is adorned with sound beliefs and noble character traits, and is protected from the whisperings of the Devil and the promptings of the lower self.

You should continuously monitor your heart, firstly because it is quick to fluctuate and change from state to state, and secondly because it is only through this that you may use your limbs to obey Allah and prevent them from disobeying Him.

The most harmful thing to the heart after associating partners with Allah [*shirk*] is to leave an obligatory act persistently or to do something forbidden by the Sacred Law persistently.

There are three signs that the heart is sound and illuminated:

- That you have a fear of Allah in private, which prevents you from doing what Allah has forbidden in a situation where He alone can see you, and you are safe from public disgrace.
- That you do not care how people perceive you, as long as Allah is pleased with you.

- That you do not care about the loss of worldly things, as long as your religion is safe.

The opposite of these three signs indicates that the heart is ruined and darkened.

The heart is a fixed target at which thoughts [*khawāṭir*] are continuously being fired. That is why it often fluctuates. Thoughts are of four types: divine, angelic, selfish, and evil. People often mistake one for another. One way of distinguishing between them is that the remembrance of Allah brings about divine and angelic thoughts and weakens evil thoughts. Through remembrance of death, selfish thoughts are weakened. Imam al-Ghazali, the Proof of Islam, has explained this in great detail in his book, ‘The Way of the Worshipful Servants’ [*Minhaj al-'Abidin ila Jannati Rabbi 'l-'Alamin*]

Some people’s hearts may be affected by base whisperings. These whisperings may affect someone’s beliefs, and they are the hardest to deal with, or they may affect his acts of worship.

To rid himself of these whisperings, he must examine them. If he is sure that they are destructive, then the only cure is to ignore them and to seek refuge in Allah the Exalted, while remembering Him abundantly.

An example of this is whisperings which cause someone to have doubt in Allah and the Last Day. If he is uncertain whether what is being whispered to him is true or false, then he should ask the people of knowledge and guidance about its ruling, and he should hold fast to and rely upon what they say to him. If an unpleasant thought inadvertently enters his heart, it is sufficient for him to dislike it. He will not then be taken to account for it.

I counsel you to guard your tongue, for the heart’s uprightness is dependant upon it. A wise man said, “The tongue is a wild beast. If you confine it, it will guard you. If you let it loose, it will devour you.”

So strive to occupy it with what concerns you, which is anything you would expect a reward for saying and fear punishment for

withholding, and this includes the recitation of the Quran, the remembrance of Allah and calling people to good.

Beware of occupying yourself with that which does not concern you, for this increases the risk of falling into forbidden things, wastes valuable time and has an immediate effect on the heart. Words and actions that are in obedience to Allah illuminate the soul; those that are merely permissible harden the heart; and those that are in disobedience to Allah darken the heart.

I counsel you to keep your tongue and heart pure and to prevent them from abusing Muslims, such as by having a wrong opinion of them. Be extremely cautious of associating with anyone who back-bites and abuses other believers. If you hear something, you dislike about someone, and you can mention it to that person in the form of sincere advice, then do so. If not, then beware of saying something about him in his absence that would hurt him, for by doing so you would be committing two foul acts: failing to give him sincere advice and abusing him.

I counsel you never to see yourself as being superior to any Muslim. If that thought enters your heart, then reflect upon what Allah has previously decreed for you and reflect upon what your ending will be. In any case, a person of sound intellect knows that he possesses many faults and defects. He can be sure of this. He cannot be equally convinced, however, that another person possesses similar flaws, for most or all of what you know about your brothers is based on assumption, and “there is nothing more false than conjecture.”¹

If you see your brother doing something wrong, then this action can be interpreted in many different ways. The scope of interpretation is vast. You should not apply this rule to yourself, however, because this will allow your lower self to become lazy and freely pursue its base desires.

We are in great need of making excuses for people and finding positive interpretations for their behaviour, and this is especially the case

¹ In a Hadith recorded in Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim

in this time in which upright people are rare while slander and conveying false information are common.

Felicitous is the one who distances himself from the people of this time, busies himself with his Lord to the exclusion of everyone else and their preoccupations, and remains steadfast in this until what is certain comes to him.¹ “What is certain” in the case of the elite is the opening of the heart to the sublime angelic realm. The other meaning of “what is certain” is death, which comes both to the ordinary people and to the elite.

I counsel you to avoid associating and having dealings with the people of this time. Do not become familiar with those that you do not know unless there is a need, and then do so with the utmost caution. Your intention in avoiding contact with them should be that they be safe from your harm, and you be safe from theirs.

Only keep the company of someone who benefits your religion. Flee from anyone who harms your faith as you would flee from a fierce predator. You should escape more quickly from someone who harms your religion because a predator can only harm your body, which is destined to be consumed by the creatures of the earth. This devil, however, hurts your heart through which you come to know your Lord and damages your religion, which is your means of salvation in the next life.

I counsel you not to enter into anything without first knowing Allah’s ruling concerning it. If it then becomes clear to you whether this is something that Allah loves you to do or to leave, then do it or leave it with a good intention.

I counsel you to be humble, for humility [*tawadu’*] is praiseworthy in every state except one: to display humility to the wealthy hoping to attain some of their wealth.

Arrogance [*takabbur*] is blameworthy in every state except in dealing with those who persistently wrong others. One may condescendingly treat them outwardly in the hope that this will prevent

¹ Surah 15 Verse 99 “Worship your Lord until what is certain comes to you”.

them from oppressing others, on condition that one's heart is free from arrogance [*kibr*].¹

I counsel you to want excellence for all Muslims, to love for them what you love for yourself and to dislike for them what you dislike for yourself in this life and the next. Speak amicably to them without disobeying Allah; give them the greetings of peace [*salām*]; be kind and gentle to them and show mercy and compassion to all of them. Show respect and adoration to the pious among them and conceal the faults of the wrongdoers among them. Pray that the wrongdoers are given the ability to repent and that the pious remain firm and continue performing right actions until they die.

Beware of resembling arrogant and oppressive people in the way you speak, dress, walk or sit, or in any other way, for whoever resembles a people is regarded as one of them, even if he does not do what they do, and this applies to both good and evil people.

I counsel you to prefer that which is of lower quality in all material things: your food, dress, house or anything else. Do so choosing modesty for the sake of your religion, preferring the afterlife over this life and emulating your Prophet, may Allah blessings and peace be upon him.

You should realise that having fewer worldly possessions leads to all good. Allah only blesses one of His slaves with this if He wishes to honour him in this life and the next. The slave must, however, be content with what Allah has apportioned him. He must not gaze at worldly adornment longing to attain it. He must not wish to be given the same worldly possessions that the lovers of this world have been given so that he can enjoy them as they enjoy them.

I counsel you to remove from your heart any hope in or fear of the creation, for if this is present in your heart, it prevents the truth from being made evident. Do not allow fear of poverty to enter your heart, for this is the worst of companions. Beware of being worried about your provision, for this is based upon nothing other than doubting what has

¹ Imam Al-Haddad distinguishes between *kibr*, which is the attribute of arrogance in the heart, and *takabbur*, which is its outward manifestation.

been apportioned to you. That which has been allocated to you, whether it be good or bad, will no doubt reach you either through your efforts or without any effort, following what the Pen¹ has recorded in the Mother of the Book².

There is thus no justification for worrying about something which has already been decreed since Allah swears by His lordship that He has guaranteed your provision. He informs in His Book.

فَوَرَبِّ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ.

“By the Lord of the heaven and the earth, this is true,”³

Therefore, focus on giving Allah the rights that are due to Him. The people of these times suffer from the tribulation of being overly concerned with their provision, which is their punishment for failing to perform what they have been commanded to do and for doing that which they have been prohibited from doing.

I counsel you to be gentle in every state, to be sincere in every action you perform and to leave everything which prevents you from focusing on Allah, whether it be your family or your wealth⁴ or anything else. Attain this by seeking that which is of benefit in the next life, by returning to Allah and relying upon Him in every state and by following the Messenger, may Allah and blessings be upon him in your character, speech and actions.

¹ Verily, the first thing Allah created was the Pen, and He said to it, “Write.” The Pen said, “O my Lord, what shall I write?” Allah said, “Write the decree and whatever will throughout eternity.” Recorded by Imam Ahmad and at-Tirmidhi

² Surah 13 ar-Rad Verse 39 “Allah blots out what He wills and confirms what He wills. With Him is the Mother of the Book (where all of Allah’s creations is recorded.)

³ Surah 51 Ad-Dhariyat Verse 23.

⁴ Surah 61 Munafiqun Verse 9 O ye who believe! Let not your riches or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. If any act thus, the loss is their own.

Chapter Four

The Way to Illuminating the Heart

Seek to purify and illuminate your heart through these three acts of worship:

- Reciting the Quran in a measured way [*tartil*] while reflecting upon its meaning [*tadabbur*].
- Remembering Allah with correct etiquette and presence of heart.
- Standing in prayer at night [*Qiyamullail*] with a broken heart and submissive limbs.

The following will help you perform those mentioned above:

- Keeping your stomach light and not weighing it down with food.
- Avoiding the company of heedless people.
- Freeing yourself from the distractions of the transient world

I counsel you to pray eleven units of the Witr prayer consistently. After that, recite the glorification of Allah [*tasbih*], the Invocations [*doa*] and the Prophetic supplication [*warad*] for this period. One of which is:

(أربعين مرة) لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٨٧

“There is no god but You: glory to You: I was indeed wrong”¹ (40 times)

¹ The end of Surah 21 Al-Anbiya Verse 87 which begins with, “And remember Dhun-nun, when he departed in wrath: he imagined that We had no power over him! But he cried through the depths of darkness.”

Then recite after the completion of the two prostrations of supererogatory dawn [*Sunnah fajr*] prayer recite,

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ. (أربعين مرة)
“O Living, O Sustainer, there is no deity save You.” (40 times)

After completing the *Fajr* prayer, recite the following,

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ. (سبعاً وعشرين مرة)
“I seek forgiveness for male and female believers.” (27 times)

Consistently pray eight prostrations [*raka'ats*] of the mid-morning [*Duḥa*] prayer. Upon finishing, recite,

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَتُبْ عَلَيَّ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ. (أربعين مرة)
“O Lord forgive me, and turn unto me in Mercy; for truly You are the Oft-Returning, Most Merciful¹.” (40 times)

After the noon [*Zuhr*] prayers, recite one hundred times,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ. (مائة مرة)
“There is no deity save Allah, the King, the Truth, the One Who makes things manifest.” (100 times)

After afternoon prayer [*ʿAṣr*] recite twenty-five times,

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ، رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي. (خمساً وعشرين مرة)

“I seek the forgiveness of Allah; there is no God but Him; the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful, the Living, the Sustainer, who does not die, and I repent to Him. My Lord, forgive me.” (25 times)

Likewise, after the *Fajr* prayers and each of the five obligatory prayers, recite the following,

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْمَحْدُودِ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ
عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ وَرِضَاءِ نَفْسِهِ وَزِينَةِ عَرْشِهِ وَمَدَادِ كَلِمَاتِهِ. (ثلاث مرة)

¹ End part of Surah 2 Al-Baqarah Verse 128.

“Transcendent is Allah; all praise and thanks belong to Allah; there is no god but Allah; Allah is most great; there is no strength or power save by Allah, the Most High, the Almighty to the number of His created things, to His satisfaction, to the weight of His throne and to the amount of ink required to record His words.” (3 times)

And

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا وَبِحَمْدِكَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْكَ أَسْأَلُكَ أَنْ تُصَلِّيَ وَتُسَلِّمَ عَلَى عَبْدِكَ وَرَسُولِكَ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ. (ثلاث مرة)

“Transcendent are You, O Allah our Lord and praise be to You as You praise Yourself. I bear witness that there is no deity save You. I seek Your forgiveness, and I repent to You. I ask You to bestow Your prayers and peace upon Your slave and messenger, our Master Muhammad and upon his Family and Companions.” (3 times)

I counsel you to consistently read a good portion of the remembrance and invocations [*adhkar*]¹ of the morning and the evening. You can find these in the books compiled on the subject, such as *Kitab al-Adhkar* by Imam al-Nawawi, in which you are most likely to find what you are searching. If you find that there are too many to read², then choose the most exemplary and comprehensive remembrance and invocations [*adhkar*] and those with the soundest chains of transmission.

¹ Imam Al-Haddad compiled these remembrance and invocations in his famous Ratib, Wirdul Latiff and other prophetic remembrance. Later these were published in various collections by his learned descendants. First, Habib Alwi bin Muhammad bin Tahir Al-Haddad put together a book called “A Means for People to Provide for the Hereafter” [*Waseelatul 'Ibaad Ilaa Zaadil Ma'aad*]. Second, by Habib Abdullah bin Ali bin Hasan bin Hussein Al-Haddad in a book called “The Easy Path to do Day and Night Deeds” [*Tariqatus Sahlah fi Amalil Yaum wal Laila*].

² Indeed there are too many to read! Habib Umar bin Muhammad bin Salem bin Hafiz has simplified all these in a small booklet called the “Cream of Prophetic Remembrance” [*Khulasatul Madad An-Nabawi*]. He had referred to the two of Imam Al-Haddad collections above, the “Near Course” [*al-Maslakal Qarib*] by Habib Tahir bin Hussein bin Tahir, the Way of the Guided [*Sabilil Muhtadin*] by Habib Abdullah bin Alawi Al-Attas and the Source of Felicity [*Manba'as Sa'aadaat*] and a collection of [*Majmuk al-Ladaaif al-Ar'shiyah*] by Habib Ali bin Muhammad Al-Habshee and others. May Allah be pleased and have mercy on them and make us benefit from them.

Chapter Five

The First Conclusion

This conclusion contains two verses from the Revealed Book, two comprehensive *Hadiths* from the *Sunnah* of the Prophet and several narrations attributed to the pious predecessors [*salaf soleh*].

Allah the Exalted says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ. وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ.

“O ye who believe! Fear [*taqwa*] Allah, and let every soul look to what (provision) He has sent forth for tomorrow. Have fear [*taqwa*] Allah: for Allah is well-acquainted with (all) that ye do. And be ye not like those who forgot Allah, and He made them forget their souls! Such are the rebellious transgressors!”¹

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

ثَلَاثٌ مُنْجِيَاتٌ: خَشْيَةُ اللَّهِ فِي الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ، وَكَلِمَةُ الْعَدْلِ فِي الرِّضَا وَالْعَصَبِ، وَالْفَقْدُ فِي الْغِنَى وَالْفَقْرِ. وَثَلَاثٌ مُهْلِكَاتٌ: شُحٌّ مُطَاعٌ، وَهَوًى مُتَّبَعٌ، وَإِعْجَابُ الْمَرْءِ بِنَفْسِهِ.

“These are three saving qualities, fearing Allah in private and in public; whether you are content or angry speak truthfully, and being moderate whether you are rich or poor. These are three destructive qualities: obeying your greed; following your whims and fancy (desires) and being proud of yourself.”²

¹ Surah 59 Al Hashr Verses 18-19.

² Narrated by al-Bayhaqī and Tabarani.

Also, he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said:

مَنْ خَافَ أَذْلَجَ. وَمَنْ أَذْلَجَ بَلَغَ الْمَنْزِلَ. أَلَا إِنَّ سِلْعَةَ اللَّهِ غَالِيَةً، أَلَا إِنَّ سِلْعَةَ اللَّهِ الْجَنَّةُ.

“The one who is in fear travels by night, and the one who travels by night reaches his destination. Truly Allah's prize is treasured. Allah's prize is Paradise.”¹

Abu Bakr al-Ṣiddiq, may Allah be pleased with him, said to Umar bin al-Khaṭṭab, may Allah be pleased with him, when he passed the caliphate to him, “Have fear and mindful of your duties [*taqwa*] to Allah, Umar, when the authority over the people is given to you. You must realise that there are certain actions which you must perform for Allah's sake during the night that He will not accept during the day, and there are certain actions which you must perform for Allah's sake during the day which He will not accept during the night. He will not accept supererogatory deeds until the person performed that which is obligatory. People will find their scales heavily laden on the Day of Judgement because they followed the truth in this life; others will find their scales light because they followed falsehood in this life.”

Ali may Allah be pleased with him, said, “If someone does these six things, he has done everything he can to enter Paradise and save himself from the Fire:

- He knows Allah and obeys him;
- He knows the Devil and disobeys him;
- He knows the truth and follows it;
- He knows falsehood and avoids it;
- He knows this material world and rejects it;
- He knows the next life and seeks it.”

¹ Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, al-Hakim and al-Bayhaqi.

Once a man asked one of the pious predecessors, “What is the path to Allah?” He replied: “If you knew Allah, you would know the path to Him.” The man said: “Transcendent is Allah! How can I worship the One who I do not know?” the man exclaimed. The pious man replied: “How then can you disobey the One you know?”

A pious man said to one of the *Abdal*¹, “Point me to an action in which my heart will constantly be with Allah when I perform it.” He said, “Do not look at people, for looking at them causes darkness to enter the heart.” The man replied, “I am not able to do that.” He said, “Then do not listen to their speech, for listening to their speech causes the heart to harden.” The man replied, “I am not able to do that.” He said, “Then do not interact with them, for interacting with them causes gloom to enter the heart.” The man said, “How can I do that when I live amongst them?” He said, “Then do not find comfort or tranquillity in their company.” The man replied, “This is possible.” He then said, “Brother, you look at the heedless, listen to the speech of those in error and you interact with useless people, and you want your heart to be constantly with Allah?”

Muhammad bin Kab al-Qurazi, may Allah have mercy on him said, “If someone possesses these three qualities their faith is complete:

- When they are content, their contentment does not lead them to falsehood;
- When they are angry, their anger does not divert them from the truth;
- If they can take something, they do not take what is not theirs.”

Ibrahim bin Adham, may Allah have mercy on him and benefit us by him said, “The people of Allah counselled me to admonish the lovers of this world with four things. They told me to tell them:

¹ Plural of *Badal*, the possessor of one of the highest spiritual stations. According to some narrations, their number is forty, and whenever one of them dies he is replaced by another.

- Whoever speaks a lot does not taste the sweetness of worship;
- Whoever sleeps a lot does not find any blessings in his life;
- Whoever seeks the pleasure of people let him not expect to attain the pleasure of Allah;
- Whoever speaks a lot about what does not concern him and backbites others will not leave this life in a state of Islam.”

A man asked Hatim al-Asamm, “Where does your food come from?” He replied: “From Allah’s treasure troves.” Then the man asked, “Is bread cast down to you from the heavens?” Hatim replied, “If the earth did not belong to Him, He would cast it down to me from the heavens.” So the man then said, “You people have nothing but words.” Hatim responded, “Was anything other than words revealed to the Prophets from the heavens?” The man said, “I am unable to debate with you.” Hatim then responded, “That is because when the truth is manifested falsehood cannot remain.”

Ibrahim al-Khawwas said, “Two statements contained all the knowledge.

Do not put undue effort into pursuing that which has already been taken care of: that is ‘your provision’;

Do not neglect that which you have been commanded to take care of: that is ‘your actions.’”

The Sufi, Sahl bin Abdullah said, “When someone’s heart is pure, their mind is busy with reflection and gold and mud are equal in their sight; they will not need people, for Allah will have answered all their needs.”

Al-Sarri as-Saqati said, “The one who truly lives knows Allah; the one who loves this life goes astray; the intelligent person constantly inspects himself and all the foolish person’s comings and goings come to nothing.”

Abu Sulayman al-Darani said, “When the soul becomes accustomed to leaving acts of disobedience it roams freely in the heavenly realm and returns to its owner with pieces of wisdom without a scholar having to teach it.”

Al-Junayd, may Allah benefit us by him, said, “We did not learn Sufism through idle talk; we learnt it through hunger, leaving worldly things and leaving things which the lower self is accustomed to and things which it deems to be good.”

One of the pious was asked what Sufism is. Then he replied, “Leaving every base character trait and embracing every noble character trait.”

Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jaylani, may Allah have mercy on him said, referring to actions, “Through it does not arrive at the heaven, but we cannot do without it. Whoever knows the value of what he is seeking will belittle what he sacrifices.”

Then the Sheikh, may we benefit by him also said, “Be with Allah, the Truth, as if people did not exist and be with people as if your lower self did not exist. If you are with the Truth as if people did not exist you will find Him, know Him and you will be annihilated in Him such that you witness nothing but Him.

If you are with people as if your lower self did not exist, you will be honest, and you will be safe from their harm and from being accountable to them for rights that are due to them.”

The Sheikh Abu’ al-Ḥasan al-Shadhili, may Allah have mercy on him and benefit us by him, said, “A beloved friend counselled me by saying, ‘Only move your feet if you are going to a place where you hope for a reward from Allah; Only sit in a place if you are normally safe there from disobeying Allah; Only keep the company of those that guide you to Allah, or to obeying the order of Allah, and these people are rare.’”

He also said, “Whoever claims to possess a state with Allah but meanwhile manifests one of these five things is either a liar or someone from whom that state [*maqam*] has been removed:

- Showing off in acts of obedience;
- Allowing the body to disobey Allah freely;
- Coveting other people's possessions;
- Insulting the people of Allah;
- Not showing respect to Muslims in the way that Allah has commanded.”

Muhammad bin Iraq, may Allah have mercy on him, mentioned in one of his letters to one of the pious, said, “The one who denies himself the desires of his stomach without denying himself his desire for status will not succeed and neither will the one who denies himself his desire for status without denying himself the desires of his stomach. Only the one who denies himself both will succeed.”

The renowned Sheikh Zarrūq, may Allah benefit us by him, said, “The foundations of the path (to Allah) are five:

- Having *taqwā* of Allah in private and in public;
- Following the *Sunnah* in word and deed;
- Turning away from people whether they love you or hate you;
- Being content with Allah whether He has given you a little or a lot;
- Returning to Allah in times of hardship and ease.”

May Allah be pleased with them all, by His favours, may He make you and us among them! Aameen!

We conclude this series of religious counsel with these verses:
 الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ، لَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلٌ مِنَّا بِالْحَقِّ.

All praise be to Allah Who guided us to this; never could we have found guidance, had it not been for the guidance of Allah. Indeed it was the truth, that the messengers of our Lord brought on to us.”¹

¹ Surah 7 Al-A'raaf Verse 43.

مَا يَفْتَحِ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ رَحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا وَمَا يُمْسِكُ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ،
وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ.

“What Allah out of His Mercy do bestow on mankind there is none can withhold: what He does withhold, there is none can grant, apart from Him: and He is the Exalted in Power, Full of Wisdom.”¹

So you must know my dear brothers, that everything that I have counselled you to do, I have first advised myself to do and all my brothers and companions specifically and likewise every Muslim who reads these counsels.

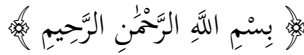
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَسَلِّمْ.

May Allah bestow prayers and peace upon our Master
Muhammad and his family and Companions.

¹ Surah 35 Faatir Verse 2.

Chapter Six

Reliance Upon Allah



In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

All praise be to Allah, the Witness, the Vigilant, the One Who is present and never absent, the Companion Who never leaves you regardless of whether you are in your hometown or on a journey. He urges people who can reflect to look at the signs that He has placed in His heavens and His earth.

May Allah bestow prayers and peace upon our Master Muhammad, and upon his blessed family, as much as clouds gather and send down rain and as much as the wind moves the branches of the trees.

After that, I counsel myself and you, my companions and loved ones, to have fear and be mindful of your duties [*taqwa*] of Allah, Lord of Lords, the Causer of all affairs. There is no deity and nothing worthy of worship other than Him, and the One who is truly sought is only He.

Felicitous is the one who relies upon Allah [*tawakkal*] and surrenders all his affairs to Him; the one who throws himself in front of Allah in a state of complete submission to Him, denying that he has any strength or power of his own, truthfully desiring and seeking that which Allah possesses.

Wretched and deprived is the one who turns away from the remembrance of his Lord, follows his caprice and prefers this life over the next.

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ أَعْمَى.

“But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down, and We shall raise him blind on the Day of Judgment.”¹

You must rely entirely [*tawakkal*] upon Allah, put your trust in His promise and be content with His guarantee that He will take care of you and suffice you. You must seek His assistance in all your affairs, rely upon Him in every state and place your needs at the door of His kindness and generosity.

You must abandon any desire to obtain what other people possess. If a Muslim gives you something then accept it, thank him, pray for him and use it according to your needs. If you do not need it, then give it away in charity. If he gives you something which is not from a lawful source, then refuse it.

You must hold fast to the five prayers, for they are the pillar of the religion. They are to the faith what the head is to the body. Praying them at the beginning of their time and praying them in the congregation as much as you are able is part of holding fast to them.

And the key to holding fast to them is that your heart is present and submissive during this period. It is shameful for someone praying that the body is in front of the Lord, but their heart is wandering in the valleys of worldly distractions.

¹ Surah 20 Ta Ha Verse 124.

Chapter Seven

Etiquettes of Travelling

Beware of belittling the dispensations [*rukhash*] that Allah has given you, such as shortening [*Qasar*] or joining [*Jamak*] prayers when it is permissible to do so. Just as in the Hadith:

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ أَنْ تُؤْتَى رُخْصَتُهُ كَمَا يُحِبُّ أَنْ تُؤْتَى عَزَائِمُهُ.

“For indeed, Allah loves for people to take His dispensations [*rukhsah*] just as He loves people to perform that which has normally been made compulsory for them.”¹

You must hold fast to all the acts of devotion which you regularly perform when you are not travelling. Do not make light of leaving any of them. You must make up any acts of divine deeds which you are unable to perform due to travelling when you can do so if they are of the sort which can be made up [*qada*']. If they are not of the kind which can be made up, then remember that Allah has made things easy for people travelling. The Hadith reported,

إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ إِذَا سَافَرَ أَوْ مَرَضَ يَأْمُرُ اللَّهُ مَلَائِكَتَهُ: أَنْ يَكْتُبُوا لَهُ مِثْلَ مَا كَانَ يَعْمَلُ مُقِيمًا وَصَحِيحًا.

“If a believer travels or becomes sick, Allah orders His angels: to record for him the same actions that he would perform when he was not travelling and was in good health.”²

¹ Narrated by Ahmad ibn Hibban and Ibn Khuzaymah.

² Narrated in Sahih Bukhari.

The waiver is a blessing, mercy and ease from Allah. All praise be to Allah for the compassion and kindness He shows to His slaves.

You must remember Allah abundantly at all times, and must continuously be in a state of inner purity, which is to have no resentment, envy or insincerity in your heart towards any Muslim.

You must also always be in a state of outer purity, meaning you do not remain in a state of ritual impurity and you do not allow your body or avoid contaminating your clothing with filth. Allah revealed to Musa, “If something unpleasant befalls you while you are not in a state of purity, then only blame yourself.”

And you must be consistent in reciting the invocations [*adhkar*] of the morning and the evening, for they are a fortress which protects you from the Devil and all types of evil.

You must be consistent in reciting the supplications recommended to recite while travelling, such as reciting the prayer to upon mounting your horse or dismounting¹, or the prayer to be read upon entering a town. You will find many of these in *Kitab al-Adhkar* by Imam al-Nawawi, so look for them and memorise them.

You must have sound hearts and generous souls, and you must show mercy to every Muslim. Be good companions to those whose company you keep, by striving to fulfil their needs as you would your own, by doing your utmost to make them happy, by giving them sincere advice and guiding them to that which benefits them in the hereafter. Shyness should not prevent you from doing this, for the worst type of reticence is shyness that prevents someone from doing good and calling others to do good deeds, and is not in fact shyness, but cowardice. The Devil calls it shyness to make people of weak faith feel at ease.

Show good character to the people whose company you keep and lower your wing to them for all good is found in being gentle, being extremely tolerant of people and preferring your companion over yourself. A believer should be quick to be pleased and slow to become

¹ Or any vehicle which you may board.

angry. A believer who has attained perfection does not become angry for his own sake but becomes upset only for his Lord. If he does become angry for his own sake, his faith prevents him from taking his anger out on anyone.

أَنَّ رجلاً قال لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، أَوْصِنِي، فَقَالَ لَا تَغْضَبْ، فَرَدَّدَ، فَقَالَ، لَا تَغْضَبْ.

“A man said to the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, “O Messenger of Allah, counsel me!” He replied, “Do not get angry” and repeated it several times.”¹

Be humble, which is to look at other believers with respect and adoration and to look at yourself with contempt and disdain.

Be sincere, which is to seek the countenance and reward of Allah in every good act that you perform and every evil deed that you leave.

Whoever seeks the countenance of Allah but at the same time seeks status, praise or material gain is showing off. And showing off causes one’s actions to come to nothing and removes their reward.

¹ Narrated by Abu Hurairah and recorded in Sahih Bukhari.

Chapter Eight

Keeping the Company of the Pious

You must keep the company of pious people, display the same etiquette that they show and seek to benefit from their deeds and words. You must visit both the living and dead amongst them in a state of great reverence for them, truthfully having the best opinion of them, and this is how visitors benefit from those that they visit and receive spiritual assistance from them. The people of this time benefit little from pious people because they have so little adoration for them and they do not have a good opinion of them. As a result of this, they are deprived of the pious people's blessings and are unable to witness their miracles¹. They thus wrongly assume that none of Allah's chosen slaves is existent in this time, when in fact there are many, praise be to Allah, some evident and some hidden. No one knows them except those whose hearts Allah has illuminated with the light of reverence and holding a reasonable opinion of them. For this reason, they said, "According to your perception, you received your portion of spiritual assistance [*madad*]."

You must distance yourselves from evil people, and avoid mixing with them and keeping their company, for this leads to loss and disgrace in this life and the next and causes those who are upright to deviate. It also generates great damage to one's heart and one's religion.

A poet spoke well when he said, "By being close to a healthy camel will not heal mangy camel; But rather the healthy camel becomes mangy."²

¹ Miracles of the Prophets are called *Mukjizat* whilst that of the pious as *Karamah*.

² 'Mange' is a skin disease found in animals which causes hair loss.

You must guard your hearts against blameworthy thoughts, and you must purify them from evil traits. You must prevent your limbs from committing acts of disobedience. You must do your utmost to guard your tongues against speech which is either forbidden or superfluous and against backbiting any Muslim, for slander or backbiting is a greater sin than fornication.

Beware of lying, because lying is at odds with your faith. The ḥadith states,

مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَلْعَنَ نَفْسَهُ فَلْيَكْذِبْ.

“If someone wishes to curse himself, then let him lie.”¹

In short, the tongue is extremely dangerous. Holding one’s tongue is very difficult, and the one bestows the ability to do so will attain a large portion of good.

You must recite the Quran in abundance with submissiveness and presence of heart. Recite in a measured way [*tartil*] and reflect upon what you are reciting. *Surah Yasin* should be part of your daily recital to obtain all goodness and ward off all harm.

Avoid filling your stomachs with food for this makes you lazy, hardens the heart, veils it from witnessing Divine lights and prevents it from being affected by the remembrance of Allah and acts of worship.

¹ This Hadith is recorded as a weak Hadith.

Nevertheless Allah, the Exalted says in Surah 3 Aali Imran Verse 61.

﴿ثُمَّ تَبْتَهِلْ فَتَجْعَلْ لَعْنَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ﴾

“Then let us earnestly pray, and invoke the curse of Allah on those who lie!”

And also in Surah 24 an Nur Verse 7.

﴿وَالْخَامِسَةُ أَنَّ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْكََاذِبِينَ﴾

“And the fifth (oath) (should be) that they solemnly invoke the curse of Allah on themselves if they tell a lie.”

Chapter Nine

Etiquettes of *Haj* and *Umrah*

You must purify your intentions to go to Allah's Sacred House, to perform the rites of *Haj*, to adore the things which He has made inviolable and sacred and to visit the grave of His Prophet, Muhammad, may Allah's blessing and peace be upon him. In travelling to those places, you should have no other purpose or aim except this and any other praiseworthy intention connected to this. Beware of combining these noble intentions with the desire for recreation or trade.

You must make circumambulation [*tawaf*] of the Ancient House in abundance, for the one making *tawaf* is immersed in mercy. While you are doing so, your hearts should be overflowing with adoration and magnification for the Lord of the House. Do not busy yourselves with anything other than recitation of the Quran, remembrance of Allah and supplication. Beware of idle speech.

Be consistent in reciting the *adhkar* and supplications which should be recited during *tawaf* and *sa'i*¹ and in other places on the *haj*. You should also have the utmost concern for visiting all the sacred sites.

You should perform *umrah* in abundance, especially in the month of Ramadhan, for performing one *umrah* in Ramadhan is equal in reward to performing *haj* with the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him.

¹ *Sa'i* is part of the ritual pilgrimages of Hajj and Umrah, the Muslims travel back and forth between Safa and Marwah, the two small hills in the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca.

You must revere the two Sacred Precincts and observe the correct etiquette therein. Honour those who live there and give them the rights due to them for living in proximity to those blessed places.

Maintain a good opinion of them individually and of the Muslims generally. If you see or hear something you dislike, be patient and remain silent. However, if you can openly speak the truth then do so, for no one has any excuse to remain silent unless he is sure he is unable to change a wrong that is being committed.

One of the best states to be in is to focus entirely on Allah and on worshipping Him such that you are unaware of the state of those around you since the people of this time have contradicted the way of the pious predecessors and left behind their excellent teachings.

مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا.

“The one whom Allah guides is rightly-guided; but the one whom Allah causes to go astray for him you will find no protector to guide him.”¹

You must perform abundant pious acts in the Sacred Precinct in Mecca, for one good deed therein is rewarded one hundred thousand times over. This multiplication is narrated explicitly regarding the prayer by the Messenger of Allah, may Allah blessings and peace be upon him. However, some scholars regard it to apply to all acts of obedience. Just as the reward for acts of obedience is far more significant in the Sacred Precinct, likewise acts of disobedience are far graver therein.

One of the pious predecessors said, “There is no place where someone is taken to account for wishing to commit an act of disobedience other than Mecca.”

The scholars use the following verse of Allah, the Exalted, as evidence for this:

وَمَنْ يُرِدْ فِيهِ بِإِلْحَادٍ بِظُلْمٍ نُذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ.

¹ Surah 18 Al-Kahf Verse 17.

“If anyone wishes therein to do wrong out of deviance, We will cause him to taste a painful punishment.”¹

Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him said, “I would prefer to commit seventy sins outside the Sacred Precincts than to commit one sin in Mecca.”

May Allah protect Mecca, and increase it in greatness, stature and nobility.

¹ Surah 22 Al-Haj Verse 25.

Chapter Ten

The Second Conclusion

States of the Pious in the Sacred Precincts

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, made *haj* riding on a worn-out saddle, under which was a rug worth less than four dirhams. On his return he said,

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ حَجًّا مَبْرُورًا لَا رِيَاءَ فِيهِ، وَلَا سُمْعَةً.

“O Allah, make it a blessed *haj* which is worthy of acceptance. Let there be neither ostentation nor the seeking of reputation therein.”¹

Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, made *tawaf* around the House. He placed his hand on the Black Stone, kissed it and then cried. He then said, “By Allah, I know that you are a stone that cannot harm or benefit anyone. Had I not seen the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, doing this, I would not have done this.”

Then he turned around and saw Ali, may Allah honour his countenance, behind him. He said to him, “O Abu al-Hasan, this is the place where tears were shed.” Ali replied to him, “O Commander of the Believers, this Stone does in fact harm and benefit people.

When Allah took the covenant with the progeny of Adam and said to them,

¹ Narrated by at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Ibn Hibaan.

Am I not your Lord?”¹

أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ؟

“He recorded this and embedded the document in this Stone. It will then bear witness to anyone who touches it with truthfulness.”²

A man met Abdullah bin Umar, may Allah be pleased with both, while making *tawaf*. He asked Abdullah bin Umar for something, but he did not respond. Abdullah bin Umar met the man again later and said to him, “Perhaps you were upset when I did not respond to you. Do you not know that when we make circumambulate [*tawaf*], we present ourselves to Allah? In any case, your needs have been answered.”

Ali Zainal Abidin, the son of al-Imam Hussain, passed by al-Hassan al-Basri who was recounting tales of the pious to people in the Sacred Mosque in Mecca. He asked him, “Is your soul prepared for death, Hassan?” “No,” he replied. “Do you know how your account will be on the Day of Judgement?” “No!” he replied. “Does Allah have a house other than this to which people come from every place?” “No,” he replied. Ali then said, “So why are you distracting people from performing *tawaf* by telling them your stories?” Hassan promptly stopped telling stories and never did so again in Mecca.

Tawus said, “I saw Ali, the son of al-Hussain, in the depths of the night standing in prayer in the *Hijr*³, so I came close to him, saying to myself, ‘This is a pious man from the People of the Prophetic Household. Perhaps I will hear him say something that will benefit me.’ I heard him saying while in prostration,

سَأَلْتُكَ بِفَنَائِكَ ، وَمَسْكِينُكَ بِفَنَائِكَ ، فَقِيرُكَ عَبْدُكَ بِفَنَائِكَ.

“A beggar is at Your door, and a poor man is at Your door. Your needy slave is at Your door.”

¹ Surah 7 Al-Araaf Verse 172 “When thy Lord drew forth from the Children of Adam from their loins - their descendants and made them testify concerning themselves and (said), “Am I not your Lord (who cherishes and sustains you)?” They said, “Yes! We do testify!” you should say on the Day of Judgment, “Of this we were never mindful.”

² Narrated by al-Hakim.

³ *Hijr* is the crescent shaped area immediately adjacent to the Ka’abah.

Tawus continued, “Whenever I called upon Allah using these words, my prayers were answered.”

Some people related that when Ali, the son of al-Imam Hussain, entered into *iḥram*¹ and when he wished to say “*Labbayk*,”² but instead he started shaking, his colour changed and he fell off his camel. When he was asked what happened, he said: “I feared that I would say ‘*Labbayk*,’ responding to the call of my Lord, but that I would be completely rejected.”

Salim bin Abdullah bin Umar and Hisham bin Abdul Malik who was then the governor of Mecca, may Allah have mercy on them, met inside the *Ka’abah*. Hisham said to him, “Ask me, that I may fulfil your need.” Salim replied, “I would be ashamed to ask other than Him, when I am in His House,” When they were outside the House, Hisham said to him, “You are now outside, so ask what you wish.” Salim asked, “Do you mean from the things of this world or the next world?” Hisham replied, “All I possess are the things of this world.” At this, Salim said, “I did not ask for worldly things from the One Who created them, so why would I ask them from anyone other than Him?”

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī passed by Tawus while he was teaching a large group of people in the Sacred Mosque in Mecca. Ḥassan approached Tawus and whispered in his ear: “If you are proud of yourself, then leave.” Tawus immediately stood up and left the gathering.

Wuhayb bin al-Ward said, “One night I was performing *tawaf* when I heard a voice from beneath the covering of the *Ka’abah*. The *Ka’abah* was complaining to Jibril about the worthless speech and backbiting is always heard from those performing *tawaf*. It said, “If they do not refrain from this, I will shake so violently that every stone from which I am made of will return to its original place!”

¹ *Iḥrām* is the state of pilgrim sanctity.

² ‘*labbayk*’ is part of the *Talbiyah* which is repeatedly invoked during the *Haj* or pilgrimage [*umrah*], upon putting on the *Ihram*, so the pilgrims can purify and rid themselves of worldly concerns. In replying to Allah’s call to perform *Haj* or *Umrah* and it means, “Ever at Your service.”

One of the pious man related that he once saw a man performing *tawaf* and *sai*'. His slaves were around him driving people out of his way to make space for him. I later saw him in Baghdad, begging. I asked him, "What had happened?" And he answered, "I showed arrogance in a place where people show humility, so Allah humbled me in a place where people show arrogance."

Another pious man related that he saw a poor man in the Sacred Mosque in Mecca sitting on a prayer mat. He had signs of piety. I had some silver *dirhams* with me, so I drew close to him and placed them on his mat. I said to him, "You can make use of this." He told me, "I have paid thousands to be alone with Allah at this moment and you want to take it away from me?" Then the man shook out his prayer mat and went on his way. He concluded, "I never saw anyone nobler than him as he left, nor anyone more humiliated than me as I picked up my *dirhams*."

Ibrahim bin Adham said, "It was a rainy night, and the *tawaf* area was empty. I performed *tawaf* and I kept saying, "O Allah, protect me from disobeying You." A voice called out to me, "Ibrahim, you have asked Me for protection, and all My slaves ask for this. If I granted it to all My slaves, upon whom would I bestow My bounty and who would I forgive?"

Al-Ḥassan al-Baṣri once stood at Arafat under the sun on a scorching day. He was asked, "Why do you not move into the shade?" He replied, "I did not realise I was in the sun. I recalled a sin that I had committed, and I did not feel the heat of the sun." It was so hot that had someone wrung out his clothes, sweat would have run forth from them. This sin that he recalled was probably a mere thought that had it come to anyone else's mind, and they would not have even considered it a minor transgression, and this is the awe that the pious predecessors had for their Lord and their distance from acts of disobedience.

It was narrated to us that once a man took seven stones from Arafat and made them bear witness to his testimony that "There is no god save Allah". He then saw in a dream that he was standing in front of Allah to be judged. He was taken to account and then ordered to be taken to the Hell-Fire. He was then brought to each of the seven gates of the Hell but

when he reached each gate, a stone came and blocked his entrance. He realised that these stones were the same stones that had borne witness to his testimony. Then his declaration that “There is no god save Allah” was brought and the gate of Paradise opened to him.

Ali bin al-Muwaffaq said, “On the eve of the Day of Arafah I saw in my dream two angels who had descended from the heavens. One of them said to the other, “Do you know how many people have come to our Lord’s House to perform *haj* this year?” The other answered, “No!” Then he said, “Six hundred thousand performed *haj*.” Then the Angel asked, “Do you know how many have been accepted?” The other answered, “No!” He said, “Six people!” ibn al-Muwaffaq said, “I awoke in a state of sorrow and distress. I said to myself, what chance do I have of being among those six!” The following night, the eve of the Day of Sacrifice, I saw the two angels again. One said to the other: “Do you know what the judgement of our Lord was?” “No,” said the other. “He gave one hundred thousand people to each of the six and thus accepted them all.” Upon hearing this, I awoke in a state of joy that was indescribable.”

Ali bin al-Muwaffaq also said, “One year I performed *haj* and I thought about those whose *haj* would not be accepted. Then I prayed, “O Allah, I donate the reward of my *haj* to those whose *haj* has not been accepted.” When I went to sleep, I saw my Lord Almighty in a dream. He said to me, “Ali, are you trying to be more generous than Me, and I am the One Who created generosity and generous people? I am the Most Generous of the generous, and it is more fitting that I show generosity than any created thing. By virtue of those who are worthy of being accepted, I have accepted those who are not worthy of being accepted!”

You should know that the narratives above are an appropriate conclusion to the counsels mentioned above. From these narratives, an intelligent person may derive etiquettes being observed in those sacred places [*haram*].

Mentioning the pious predecessors and their lives give comfort to the traveller on the path to the next life, for they are the people he should

seek to emulate. He only realises his deficiencies by looking at their diligence.

If, however, he looks at the people of his time and their procrastination and heedlessness, he will most likely become proud of himself or harbour a wrong opinion of them, both of which are blameworthy.

The felicitous one is someone who emulates the pious predecessors, uses them as a proof against himself, and drives himself to walk in their footsteps and to follow their straight path.

All praise be to Allah the Exalted for His enabling grace.

Chapter Eleven

Four Foundations for the Seekers

﴿ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴾

In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

﴿ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ ﴾

There is no might or power except with Allah.
The Highest and the Supreme in Glory.

All praise be to Allah, the One Who is unique in His majesty and greatness. Everything in existence is in prostration to Him and proclaims His transcendence.

May Allah's prayers and peace be upon our master Muhammad, His messenger and slave and upon his Family and Companions.

After that, you must know as a seeker who wishes to travel the path to complete realisation, that the most important thing is for your heart to be entirely focused on the love of Allah and on seeking Him, and for your body to be fully engaged in obeying Him and seeking closeness to Him.

Then you requested that I write a short counsel for you that is appropriate to your state. I now answer your request, hoping that you will find complete comfort and benefit therein and that you will pray for me. May Allah bless you with His enabling grace and make you from among the elite of those travelling His path.

The most comprehensive and beneficial counsel, and the counsel of Allah to us and to those who came before us, is the Exalted's saying,

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنْ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ.

“We have commanded those who were given the Scripture before you, and We command you, to have fear and be mindful of the duties [*taqwa*] of Allah.”¹

After this, the most comprehensive and beneficial counsel is the counsel of the Messenger of Allah may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, to his Companions and his nation, to hold fast to the Book and the *Sunnah*. If you know this, then I counsel you to establish and make firm ‘The Four Foundations’, for everything depends on this. They are the beginning and if they are sound, the ending results will be sound.

Firstly, fulfilling the inner [*batin*] commitments, such as sincerity, which is to make one's sole aim Allah, the One, the Unique; along with the outer [*dzahir*] obligations, such as the prayer, which is to stand in front of the King, the All-Knowing in a state of complete obedience.

Secondly, avoiding inward [*batin*] prohibitions, such as following one's caprice, and outward [*dzahir*] prohibitions, such as competing with the people of this age over the transient world, which is, in reality, a putrid corpse.

Thirdly, being in a constant state of neediness to Allah and attaining a state of complete lowliness and brokenness in front of Him.

Fourthly, having complete reliance and dependence upon Allah in every affair and being content with Him while seeking His forgiveness and seeking His assistance alone, inwardly and outwardly.

You must strengthen these four foundations with four others, which are:

First, ‘diligence’ which is expending what you can to reach the Beloved.

¹ Surah 4 An-Nisaa Verse 131.

Second, ‘truthfulness’ which is using all your inner [*batin*] and outer [*dzahir*] strength to attain what you are seeking.

Third, ‘perseverance’ which is persistently being diligent and truthful in your pursuit.

Fourth, having high aspirations which are not to be content with anything less than being completely focused upon Allah, seeking Him wholeheartedly and being satisfied with Him such that you do not need people.

Shaykh Umar bin al-Farid made this beautiful statement,

“I have pledged my love for Him, and I will be content with nothing less than annihilation in Him.”

“Others may be content with a dream vision
But even being united with Him is not enough for me.”

Then complete these four foundations with four more, which are:

- Reciting the Quran and reflecting deeply upon its meanings.
- Constantly, remembering Allah with a present heart.
- Standing [*Qiam*], in front of Allah in the darkness of the night.
- Keeping the company of those who guide you to Allah or assist you in obeying Him.

Chapter Twelve

The Company One Should Keep

Beware of those who distract you and stop you from busying yourself with Allah and worshipping Him, and those who invite you to disobey His orders or to be heedless of Him, either with their words or their states.

If they invite you to this with their words, then the harm of this is clear. As for them asking you to this with their states, this is because whenever you keep the company of someone who is secretly leaving a compulsory act of obedience or persistently committing an act of disobedience, something is transferred from their heart to yours which invites you to do the same.

In these times, you should only choose to keep the company of someone who you know will benefit you in your religion. He may increase you in insight into your path or increase your energy in striving to attain your goal. Alternatively, you may choose to keep the company of someone whose religion you will benefit. You may only choose to keep someone's company if you are sure that your religion will be safe if you do so.

The seeker may be forced to keep the company of certain people at certain times for three reasons:

Firstly, he may be requested to do so by those who have rights over him according to the Sacred Law, such as his relatives.

Secondly, due to a need, he has in his religious or worldly affairs which cannot be fulfilled without mixing with them.

Thirdly, due to his exertions, the seeker may experience loneliness or may find the path burdensome, and this is part of human nature, and it can only be removed by mixing with people, and this is a type of relaxation or recreation which some of the Companions engaged.

If you are obliged to mix with people for these reasons, then make your intention sound for doing so and be sure that your religion is safe while you are mixing with them. If you are present while someone disobeys Allah, you must rebuke them. If they do not listen and do not accept your advice, then save yourself and flee to protect your religion.

You must continuously return to Allah, absolving yourself of possessing any strength or power. If you experience any difficulty, constriction, or loneliness, then say in abundance,

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ.

“There is no strength or power save by Allah,
the Most-High, the Almighty.”

The remembrance is a beneficial remedy for every ailment of this type, and also repeat in abundance the words of Dhun Nun, may blessings and peace be upon him,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ.

“There is no god but thou: glory to thee: I was indeed wrong!”¹

You must hold your lower self [*nasf*] in suspicion in every state regardless of whether it is obedient or not. Beware of ever being content with it, for whoever is content with his lower self [*nasf*] is exposing himself to destruction. Direct it to seek its Lord at all times and be aware of its complete deficiency in fulfilling His rights. Even if you are expending all your efforts in serving Him, the power of your Lord over you is too high for you to be able to fulfil.

You must remember the blessings that He has poured upon you inwardly and outwardly, in your religion and your worldly life, and you

¹ Surah 21 Al-Anbiya Verse 87.

must go to great efforts to show gratitude for them with your heart and body.

‘Gratitude of the heart’ is for it to recognise that every blessing that it receives is from Allah and to be joyful for every favour since it is a means to gain closeness to Allah.

‘Gratitude of the Tongue’ is to praise the Bestower of the blessings in abundance.

‘Gratitude of the rest of the Body’ is to use every blessing to seek His pleasure and to assist it in obeying Him.

Beware of worrying about your provision, for it blackens the face of the heart and turns it away from Allah, the Truth. Worrying about it is the affair of the ordinary people who are slaves to their delusions, those who are only concerned with serving their bodies. The cursed Devil often casts it into the path of those who are seeking Allah so that they turn back on their heels. So beware of him and his scheming. Seek refuge in Allah from the evil of his trickery and deception. Fortify yourself in the fortress of faith and reliance upon Allah.

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ. إِنَّمَا سُلْطَانُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِهِ مُشْرِكُونَ.

“No authority has he over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord. His authority is over those only, who take him as patron and who join partners with Allah.”¹

Beware of seeing yourself as superior to any Muslim. The problem here is not the thoughts that may cross your mind, for a slave may be afflicted by this, but rather if you make a definite judgement, for in doing so you are showing arrogance to Allah and intruding into the unseen realm, the knowledge of which belongs to Allah alone.

¹ Surah 16 an-Nahl Verse 99-100.

Chapter Thirteen

Reflection and Remembrance

You must reflect upon the signs contained in the Divine Dominion; upon the extreme manifestations of Divine power; upon the blessings which have reached you and been given to you in this life; upon the afterlife to which is the return; and upon your sins and shortcomings in serving Allah, the All-Powerful.

A person should not allow their day and night to pass without spending long periods or, at the very least a portion of time, in reflection. It is okay if they can apportion a time in the middle of the night to reflect upon the unusual manifestations of Divine power, a time at the beginning of the day to reflect upon Allah's blessings, and a period at the end of the day or the beginning of the night to reflect upon this life and the next. Reflecting upon one's sins, wrongdoings and shortcomings in worshipping one's Lord come into reflecting upon this life.

You must remember Allah, for it is the key and the path to success, the lamp which illuminates the soul and the market place in which profits are to be made. Take for yourself a portion of each type of remembrance which you recite regularly.

Recite constantly:

“There is no deity save but Allah.”

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ.

This phrase is the soul of all the other types of remembrance, and they and all their meanings return to it, as the pious knowers of Allah have said.

If Allah, the Truth, grants you some subtle gifts, or unveils to you some lights, or reveals to you some secrets, then thank Him for that, for it is His blessing which He has bestowed upon you.

Do not be deluded by what has been made manifest to you, do not rest upon it or find comfort in it, for then Allah's assistance will reach you.

Chapter Fourteen

Certitude [*Yaqin*]

You must realise that the foundation of every act of worship, the means to attain all types of felicity, the key which opens the door to obtaining all goals and desires, the basis of all transactions and connections, and the source of all unveilings and subtle gifts is having perfect certitude [*yaqin*], and this is the perfection and furthest extent of one's faith. It could be attained as a result of Divine generosity without any previous striving or sacrifice on the part of the slave. The slave then turns entirely to Allah and travels to Him after having attained it.

It could also be attained, as is most often the case after the slave has sought it and anticipated it while knocking on the door. He does so by continually directing himself to Allah with words and deeds that draw him closer to the Great, the Exalted, the sole possessor of beauty, majesty and perfection, the All-Bountiful. There is no deity save Him. Upon Him, I rely, and to Him, I turn in repentance.

All praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. May Allah bestow prayers and peace upon our Master Muhammad and his pure Family and his most noble Companions, and upon all those that follow them in excellence until the Day of Recompense.

The one in need of Allah's pardon and forgiveness, Abdullah bin Alawi al-Haddad al-Hussaini said: "The whole of this collection of counsels was dictated, by the bounty of Allah, on Sunday 4th Syaaban 1071. The one who requested it from me is the one I love for Allah's sake, the one who desires to travel the path to Allah and to follow the way of the people of Allah, Shaykh Umar bin Salim Ba Zib al-Shibami, may Allah show him His gentleness. Amin, Amin, Amin!

Chapter Fifteen

How to Approach Allah

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

﴿مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ﴾

What Allah wills will be and there is no strength or power save by Allah.

All praise be to Allah, Who blesses the tongue with clear speech and prepares those of His slaves who are truthful and sincere in Islam and faith to accept the truth and act according to it.

May Allah bestow prayers and peace upon our Master Muhammad and upon his Family and Companions and those that follow them in excellence until the Day of Recompense.

You asked me, my beloved brother, to counsel you. The best, most beneficial, most effective and most comprehensive of counsels are the counsels that Allah gave to His slaves in His Book, and the counsels that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, and his family gave to his nation. You must accept them and act according to them, and you will then attain felicity, guidance, everlasting prosperity and success.

My counsel to you after that is:

- To be content with your Lord, to trust in Him and attach yourself to Him;
- To attain noble character traits;

- To divorce this material world and to free yourself from slavery to it;
- To close the doors to your base desires;
- To act according to the truth at all times;
- To be truthful in all your dealings;
- To stand at Allah's door always;
- To go against the caprice of your lower self [*nafs*];
- To obey Allah's orders;
- To continually perform acts of obedience;
- To avoid everything which distracts you and prevents you from focusing on Him;
- To seek those who can guide you to Him;
- To distance yourself from acts of disobedience;
- To assist those who are seeking Him;
- To adore the things which are sacred and inviolable in His religion;
- To serve His chosen servants, those who are absorbed by His love and preoccupied with His service;
- To be grateful for His blessings;
- To be patient in the face of His tribulations;
- To be content with His decree;
- To surrender to His judgement;
- To be always on the path of truth and to travel towards it.

Recite the Book of Allah consistently and remember Allah always. Stand in front of Allah in the darkness of the night when people are asleep.

Consistently perform the five prayers in the best way, since they can be likened to the head or pillar of the religion. Make your heart aware in every state of the fact that your Lord is watching you and that His knowledge encompasses you.

Be vigilant of Him in every breath and every instant. Be with goodness and the people of good. Allow Allah to see in your heart the love of truth and the love of being upright in defence of truth. Correct your intention between you and Him, and He will take care of that which is between you and His creation.

Leave some of the demands of your lower self [*nafs*] for the sake of your Lord and leave some of your worldly possessions for your afterlife. Anticipate that death will descend upon you at any moment. Make provision for your return, and the best provision is *taqwa*. Purify your heart from every blameworthy trait and desire good for all Muslims. Patiently bear the harm that you receive from people. Do not be harsh to those who are cruel to you. Give to Muslims what you would love them to give you.

When you travel, let your spiritual ambition drive your feet forward and let your heart move with your body.

Let reliance [*tawakkal*] upon Allah be your provision, having a good opinion of Him your support, truthfulness your vehicle, and neediness and brokenness your inner and outer garments.

Let your contentment with Him to the exclusion of all others be your companion.

Chapter Sixteen

Inner Meanings of *Haj*

When you reach His inviolable House, and your eyes look upon it, make your heart gaze upon the Lord of the House.

Haj has an outer element and an inner element. The outward feature is the Sacred Law [*shari'ah*] and the internal component is reality [*haqiqah*]. Do not focus on one aspect to the exclusion of the other, but rather combine the two.

You must realise that there is a house inside you that belongs to Allah, which is your heart. He has ordered Ibrahim (your knowledge) and Ismail (your intellect) to purify it for the angels and spirits who wish to make circumambulation [*tawaf*] of it, seclude themselves in it, bow and prostrate in it.¹

Anyone who possesses neither “Ibrahim” nor “Ismail” is ignorant and foolish, and the Fire will consume him. Anyone who owns them both but does not allow them to purify the house so that it is fit for those who wish to make *tawaf* of it and seclude themselves in it is a representative of the Devil.

¹ The Imam is referring to Allah’s saying in Surah 2 Baqarah Verse 125,

وَعَهَدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ

“And We covenanted with Ibrahim and Ismail, that they should sanctify My House for those who compass it round, or use it as a retreat, or bow, or prostrate themselves.”

When a person’s heart is pure, the angels come to it and cause good notion to enter it, thus inspiring the person to do good. The Imam likens the angels to people worshipping around the Ka’abah.

An example of such a person is a heedless scholar who does not act according to the dictates of his knowledge and intellect.

At this point you must understand the statement of the Messenger of Allah may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, when he said, narrating the words of Allah in the *ḥadīth Qudsi*,

مَا وَسِعَنِي أَرْضِي وَلَا سَمَائِي، وَوَسِعَنِي قَلْبُ عَبْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِ.

“My earth and My heavens cannot contain Me, but the heart of my believing slave contains Me.”

His real slave is the one whose whole being, inward and outward, is entirely focused on his slavehood to His lordship, devoid of any other motive, and one person only indeed attains this in each time. He is the supreme representative of Allah on earth [*khalifah*], the unique one with the highest spiritual station [*fard*] and the source of aid [*ghawth*], the mirror of the Divine presence. He is the intermediary between Allah and His creation, through whom flows forth spiritual and physical assistance. He is the believing slave in the *ḥadīth* mentioned above. His heart is the Throne [*Arsh*] of the Most Compassionate and his chest is Allah's Footstool [*kursi*] that extends over the heavens and the earth.

It was not our aim to mention these words in this counsel, but your intention and your genuine desire brought them forth, my beloved brother so that you devote yourself entirely to your Lord.

Beware of being in a state of heedlessness and not remembering Him. You must hold fast to the remembrance of Allah, for it is the arena that one must enter to attain an opening.

You must renew your repentance and seek Allah's forgiveness in abundance at all times. Force your heart to witness your falling short in giving your Lord the right which is due to Him, even if you were to worship Him as much as all people worship Him from the first to the last of them.

May Allah bless you and us with enabling grace, beautify us with well-being and safety and allow us to be mindful of our duties to Allah [*taqwa*] and uprightness truly.

May He cause us to live our lives on the path and religion of light, with which His most noble Messenger, the one most beloved to Him was sent, our Master Muhammad, may Allah bestow prayers and peace upon him and his family.

﴿وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

All praise and thanks belong to Allah, Lord of the Worlds.

These counsels were dictated at sunrise on Friday 12th *Rajab* 1072 *Hijri*.

Chapter Seventeen

Holding Fast to the Prayer

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا. وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بُلِغُ أَمْرِهِ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا.

“And for those who mindful of their duties [*taqwa*] to Allah, He ever prepares a way out, And He provides for him from sources he never could imagine. And if anyone puts his trust in [*tawakkal*] Allah, sufficient is Allah for him. For Allah will surely accomplish his purpose: verily, for all things has Allah appointed a due proportion.”¹

All praise be to Allah, Who made showing obedience to Him and having *taqwa* of Him a means and a path for the slave to attain all good and all divine gifts in his afterlife and his worldly life. All praise be to Allah, Who made disobedience to Him and contravention of His commands a cause of disgrace on earth and upon the Day of Judgment entering the Fire.

May Allah’s blessings and peace be upon the Prophet, the Chosen One, our Master Muhammad and his family and Companions, the best of leaders.

¹ Surah 65 Verses 2-3.

After that to proceed, I give you the following counsels, may Allah bless you, take control of your affairs, place you in His care and concern and treat you inwardly and outwardly as He treats His pious slaves.

I counsel you to have *taqwa* of Allah, Who created you and everything by holding fast to performing the five prayers. Beware of failing to do so, and beware of performing them after their appointed time has ended. Perfect your bowing and prostration in them and reflect upon what you recite in them. Pray in a state of submissiveness, do not turn to one side or the other and do not move any of your limbs while in prayer.

And you should know that if someone is not consistent in performing the prayer their heart dies, their provision becomes limited and their Lord becomes displeased with them.

Recite the Quran in abundance at all times. Beware of rushing while reciting and speaking about things unrelated to your recitation.

Remember Allah in abundance in every state, for remembrance, is an impenetrable fortress which protects man from the Devil and all types of harm.

Beware of all types of disobedience. Do not come close to committing any of them, whether they be minor or major, for all evil is contained in them and committing them leads to abasement in this life and the next. The one who commits them is distant from Allah and all good.

Be dignified, tranquil and cautious in all your affairs.

Do not enter into something without first consulting someone more knowledgeable of it than you.

Accept the advice of anyone who advises you.

Beware of speaking, laughing and joking excessively.

Beware of making fun of any Muslim even if outwardly [*dzahir*] he may seem contemptible.

Do not enter into that which does not concern you.

Altogether avoid disputing with people and arguing with them.

Guard your tongue, hearing, sight, private parts, stomach and all your body parts from everything which Allah has made forbidden for you.

Beware of looking at or listening to something which is not permissible for you to look at or listen.

Do your utmost to guard your private parts.

You must be certain that Allah sees you at all times, so ensure that He does not see you doing something He has forbidden you from doing, and He does not find you absent when He has commanded you to do something.

Beware of keeping company and mixing with base and despicable people. Only keep the company of good people.

If at some time, you are afflicted with the company of evil people, strive to protect your religion and your honour.

Beware of lying about anything, whether it is something trivial or something important.

Beware of backbiting Muslims, speaking about them behind their backs and seeking out their faults and trying to expose them. These things cause Allah to be angry with the perpetrator.

Only seek to emulate your predecessors [*salaf*] and only find to resemble people of religion and piety in all your affairs and states.

Do not be wasteful in your food, clothing or anything else, for Allah does not love those who are extravagant¹.

Be sure that goodness, honour and nobility in the sight of Allah and His creations are to be found in consistently performing acts of obedience and altogether avoiding acts of disobedience. So act upon this, may Allah bless you.

¹ Surah 6 Al-An'am Verse 141.

You must recite *Surah Ya-Sin* in the morning and evening when embarking on every important affair, and for every good thing, you wish to attain and every evil thing you fear. Its relationship to the Quran is like the relationship of a ruler to his subjects. Whenever a truthful person recites it to attain good or deflect evil, he achieves what he is seeking.

You must recite *Surah Quraysh*, for in it is a great secret which has the effect of warding off poverty and warding off things which one fears.

Recite the following in the morning and the evening before you sleep:

- *Surah al-Fatihah*
- *Ayat al-Kursi*
- The last two verses of *Surat al-Baqarah*
- *Surah al-Ikhlās*, *Surah al-Falaq* and *Surah An-Nas* three times each
- Recite the following supplications three (3) times each:

أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّاتِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ.

“I seek refuge in the complete words of Allah from the evil of what He has created.”

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ.

“In the Name of Allah. Nothing in the heavens and earth may harm the one who mentions His name. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.”

- Recite the following supplications ten (10) times each:

١. أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ.

1. “I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed devil”.

٢. بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ.

2. “In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. There is no strength or power save by Allah, the Most-High, the Almighty”.

٣. اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلٰى اٰلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَسَلِّمْ.

3. “O Allah, bestow blessings upon our Master Muhammad and the Family of Muhammad and peace.”

You must recite *Surah Quraysh*, for in it is a great secret which has the effect of warding off poverty and warding off things which one fears.

- Recite the following supplication seven (7) times:

حَسْبِيَ اللّٰهُ لَا اِلهَ اِلاَّ هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيْمِ.

“Allah is sufficient for me. There is no deity save Him. In Him, I place my trust, and He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne”.

- Recite the following supplications three (3) times:

١. سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ، عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ، وَرِضَىٰ نَفْسِهِ، وَزِنَةَ عَرْشِهِ،
وَمِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهِ.

1. “Transcendent is Allah and praises be to Him as many times as the number of His creations, and all His Spiritual Blessings, and all the beauty of His Throne and all His true sayings.

٢. يَا اللّٰهُ، يَا حَفِيْظُ، يَا لَطِيْفُ، يَا رَحِيْمُ، يَا هَادِي، يَا رَزَّاقُ، احْفَظْنِي
وَالْطَّفُ بِى، وَارْحَمْنِي، وَاِهْدِنِي وَارْزُقْنِي.

2. O Allah, O Guardian, O Gentle, O Merciful, O Guide, O Provider, protect me, be gentle to me, show mercy to me, guide me and provide for me.

Remember these counsels, hold fast to them and act according to them. Act sincerely for Allah, praise Him and show gratitude to Him. Attach yourself to Allah, rely upon Him and return to Him in repentance.

Let Allah be sufficient for you at all times, seek His assistance and trust in Him.

Do not be attached to people and do not rely upon them for they do not possess the ability to harm, benefit, give or withhold independently of Allah. If someone treats you well, thank Allah and thank him. If someone mistreats you, place his affair in Allah's hands and do not abuse him in response.

Do not say, nor hear and nor look at that except which is good. Maintain a sound heart in your dealings with every Muslim and do not conceal in your soul any resentment, envy, deceit or hatred towards any Muslim. Those who do good will be rewarded for it, and those who do evil will suffer the consequences.

Allah the Exalted says,

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ.

“If anyone does a righteous deed, it ensures to the benefit of his soul; if he does evil, it works against (his soul). In the end, will ye (all) be brought back to your Lord.”¹

The Exalted also says,

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ. وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ.

“Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, see it! And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it.”²

The Exalted also says,

اعْمَلُوا مَا شِئْتُمْ إِنَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ.

“Do what you will: verily He clearly sees all that you do.”³

¹ Surah 45 Al-Jathiyah 15

² Surah 99 Al-Zalzalah Verses 7-8.

³ Surah 41 Fussilat Verse 40.

These are my counsels to you and Allah is your guardian, and He takes care of the pious. So be pious, and He will take care of you. If He takes care of you, you will not need any person.

May Allah continually bless you with enabling grace. May He make *taqwa* your provision and may He facilitate well for you wherever you go. May He be with you wherever you are and likewise with us and those beloved to us and all the believers and Muslims, for indeed He is the Most Merciful.

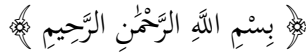
Allah's needy slave, Abdullah bin Alawi al-Haddad al-Hussaini, may Allah pardon him and his predecessors dictated this, at the request of his brother, Sayyid Umar bin Alawi al-Haddad Ba Alawi. May Allah be pleased with Sayyid Umar and enable everyone to attain His pleasure.

It was dictated on Sunday 11th Muḥarram, the first month of the year 1075.

Noted: The above invocations, supplications and remembrance for the morning and evening were later compiled by Imam Al-Haddad into a comprehensive yet simple collections called *Wirdul Latiff* which all have reference to the Hadith of the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and pece be upon him.

Chapter Eighteen

Belief in Allah His Messenger and the Last Day



In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

May Allah's blessings and peace be upon our Master Muhammad, the Trustworthy Messenger, and upon his pure Family and his noble Companions.

After that, I counsel myself and you, O lover, O seeker, and any Muslims and believers, male and female, whom this collection of counsels reaches, to believe in Allah and His Messenger and the Last Day.

The meaning of Belief in Allah is to have certainty, and to bear witness that He, the Exalted, is your God and Lord, that you have no god, nor lord, other than Him; He, the exalted, is the God and Lord¹ of the whole of creation. There is no god, nor lord, other than Him.

The meaning of Belief in His Messenger, Muhammad, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, is to believe and bear witness to the following: that Allah sent him with the truth and with guidance to all people; that he is truthful and trustworthy; that Allah gave him

¹ The word 'God' [*Ilāh*] signifies the Supreme Being, the Creator of all that exists, whereas the word 'Lord' [*Rabb*] signifies Allah's caring and nurturing nature.

revelation; that He revealed the Quran to him and that He made it incumbent upon His slaves to believe in him and follow him.

The meaning of Belief in the Last Day is to believe in death and what comes after it: that people will be questioned in the grave; that they will either be punished or experience bliss in the grave; and that when the trumpet is blown, they will be brought back to life after death to be gathered to stand in front of Allah, the Exalted. It is also to believe that people will be taken to account [*Hisab*] for their actions, to believe in the Scales [*Mizan*], the Bridge [*Sirat*], the Pool [*Hawd*], Intercession [*Syafaa'*], Paradise [*Jannah*] and the Fire [*Nar*]. Belief in the Last Day is to know and to be certain that all of this is a reality of which there is no doubt.

Anyone who does not believe in this is one of the people of disbelief and misguidance.

Chapter Nineteen

Pillars of Islam

I counsel you to be mindful of your duties [*taqwa*] to Allah, the Exalted, to obey Allah's commands and to avoid that which Allah has prohibited.

I counsel you to consistently perform the five **prayers**, which are the pillar of this religion, to pray them in a congregation and to pray them at the beginning of their fixed time as far as possible. I counsel you also to consistently perform the actions from the *Sunnah* which pertain to the prayer and to pray the *Sunnah* prayers before and after the obligatory prayers. I counsel you to be in a state of submissiveness during the prayer and to have a present heart, for Allah does not accept the prayer of those who are heedless.

I counsel you to give the ***zakat*** which Allah has made obligatory upon His slaves. I advise you to give charity, perform good deeds, feed the poor and destitute and to assist the weak and needy in abundance.

I counsel you to **fast** the month of Ramadan, which involves guarding your fast against idle talk and worthless pastimes. I advise you to fast three days every month and generally to fast in abundance, for it is a means of illuminating the heart and disciplining the soul.

I counsel you to go to Allah's inviolable House to perform ***haj***. The obligatory *haj* must be made once in a lifetime by those who are able, and once accomplished, a supererogatory *haj* is one of the most meritorious acts that one can achieve.

I counsel you to recite the Quran in abundance in a measured way [*tartil*] while reflecting upon its meaning [*tadabbur*] and to remember Allah the Exalted with focus and presence always.

Chapter Twenty

Dealing with People

I counsel you to show kindness to your parents and to honour your ties of kinship [*silatil arhami*].

I counsel you to treat your neighbours well and to be an excellent companion to those whose company you keep.

I counsel you to enjoin good and forbid evil. You must maintain a sound heart in your dealings with Muslims. There must be no hatred, resentment, envy or deceit in your heart for any Muslim. You must love for them the good that you love for yourself and dislike for them the evil that you hate for yourself.

You should show mercy and compassion to all Muslims, especially the weak, the poor, widows, orphans and those who have suffered calamities.

You should refrain from harming a single Muslim and patiently bear harm from any of them.

You should be extremely wary of wronging anyone in anything, however small that thing may be, for oppression in this world will be manifested in the form of darkness on the Day of Judgement¹.

¹ The Prophets, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said, "Oppression will be manifested in the form of darkness on the Day of Judgement."

Narrated by al-Bukhari, Muslim and at-Tirmidhi.

Chapter Twenty One

Deadly Sins

Be scrupulous in avoiding everything that Allah, the Exalted has prohibited upon you, regardless of whether those acts of disobedience are regarded to be major or minor sins.

The following are among the major, deadly sins which cause those who commit them to enter the Fire:

- Sorcery [*sihir*],
- Killing a person whose life Allah has made sacrosanct unless it is for a just cause,
- Fornication and Sodomy,
- Consuming alcohol or any intoxicant,
- Accepting usurious gain [*riba*'],
- Wrongfully taking an orphan's property,
- Dishonouring one's parents
- Severing ties of kinship [*Silatul Rahmi*].

Be extremely wary of these sins and of everything which Allah, the Exalted, has prohibited.

I counsel you to repent to Allah, the Exalted, from every wrongdoing and to seek His forgiveness in abundance.

I counsel you to have a fear of Allah and to have hope in His bounty.

I counsel you to rely upon [*tawakkal*] Allah, not to be attached to this worldly life, to be content with the provision which Allah, the Exalted, has apportioned you and to be satisfied with His decree.

I counsel you to love Allah, His Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, the people of the Prophetic Household, the pious and all His believing slaves. You should dislike wrongdoers and distance yourself from them.

I counsel you to prepare for death by remembering it abundantly and to prepare the best provision for the next life by attaining *taqwā* and performing good works.

Allah the Exalted says:

وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ.

“And whatever good you do, be sure Allah knows of it. And take a provision with you for the journey, but the best of provisions is right conduct [*taqwa*]. So fear [*taqwa*]¹ Me, o you that are wise.”²

These are my counsels for myself and you, O lover, and for all believers, male and female.

We seek Allah's forgiveness and assistance, and we bestow prayers and peace upon our Master Muhammad and his family and Companions.

The poor slave dictated these counsels,

Abdullah bin Alawi al-Haddad,

may Allah treat him with gentleness.

¹ We can see that there is no direct translation for *taqwa* – to be mindful of our duties to Allah is to have the right conduct and add an element of fear into the act.

² Surah 2 Al Baqarah Verse 197.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Submitting to Allah

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

﴿وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ﴾

All praise and thanks belong to Allah.

﴿وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ﴾

There is no might or power except with Allah
The Most-High and the Supreme in Glory

I seek Allah's forgiveness, and I repent to Him from all sins. I bestow prayers and peace upon Allah's slave and messenger, our Master Muhammad, and upon his Family and Companions. They were those upon whom Allah sent down tranquillity and those whom He made to hold fast to the "Word of *Taqwa*¹", and they were most worthy and deserving of it.

¹ Allah the Exalted says in Surah 48 al-Fath Verse 26

فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَى وَكَانُوا أَحَقَّ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا.

"Allah sent down His Tranquillity to his Messenger and to the Believers, and made them stick close to the command of self-restraint ("Word of *Taqwa*"); and well were they entitled to it and worthy of it. And Allah has full knowledge of all things."

The "*Word of Taqwā*," according to the commentators, is to belief in Allah's oneness or obedience to Him.

I give you the following counsels, O righteous slave who is, if Allah wills, always under His gaze.

I counsel myself and you to have *taqwa* of Allah in every place, in every state and wherever you are.

I counsel you also to be vigilant of Allah and to be constantly aware of His knowledge, His awareness of you, His being with you and His encompassment of you.

I counsel you to be sincere and truthful with Allah, to humble yourself to Allah, to show gratitude for His blessings and patience in the face of His tribulations, to be content with His decree, whether it be bitter or sweet.

Do not choose anything that He has not chosen, do not prefer anything over Him and do not prefer your choice over His. If you plan to do something, then only do so following what He has commanded you to do or forbidden you from doing.

Do not attach your heart to anything other than your Lord. Raise your aspirations above created things. Do not be proud of yourself and do not raise yourself over any of your brothers. Never obey your lower self [*nasf*] which always commands you to evil. Make the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* your judge and your leader.

Only enter into an act of worship, or a merely permissible act, with a pious intention. Beware of neglecting to make a good intention out of heedlessness and failing to bring it to heart upon every movement.

I counsel you to establish the prescribed prayers as you have been commanded. Strive to pray with a heart which is present with Allah, submissive and empty of everything other than Him.

Expend everything you possess to pray in congregation and to pray at the beginning of the prayer's time.

Stand in prayer at night as much as you are able, and it is better and more beneficial if you do this after having slept. Plead with Allah in abundance at this time and raise your needs to Allah, and they will be fulfilled.

Recite the Quran as much as you are able every day and night. Recite in a slow, measured way [*tartil*] with the presence of heart and reflect upon what you are reciting [*tabaddur*].

Recite it in stages and start at the beginning and work your way through until you complete it, even if this takes a month or forty days. The secret is in reflection and presence of heart, not in reciting the Quran in abundance.

Remember Allah always with your tongue and heart. Say continuously:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

“There is no deity save Allah.”

You should witness its meaning in your heart. Remember Allah consistently and relentlessly. Beware of being heedless of your Lord’s remembrance, for the one who is heedless of his Lord’s remembrance is someone whose heart is dead.

Reflect frequently upon death, and the affairs of the Afterlife for this softens and illuminates the heart and drives it to seek Allah and the everlasting abode.

Chapter Twenty-Three

Relationship with Your Brothers



In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

Always have an open heart, a cheerful demeanour, a happy face and kind words for other believers. You must lower your wing to them and be gentle to them. Do your best to seek their love and to have a harmonious relationship with them. Coax them if they require it, according to your ability, to rectify them and make their religion firm. If someone does good, then thank them and speak well of them without exaggeration. If someone does wrong, then overlook it and give sincere advice in private, with gentleness and compassion, to those who need it.

Be someone who patiently bears and always overlooks the errors of his brethren.

Beware of harsh and coarse behaviour, for this is the attribute of tyrants. Never rebuke someone for falling short in fulfilling one of your rights unless he is a special friend whom you genuinely love and whose truthfulness has been proven.

If, however, someone falls short in fulfilling the rights of Allah or His slaves then do not pardon them but rather request that they fulfil these rights. Your treatment of them should vary according to their state and level of religiosity.

You should thus be more gentle in your dealings with beginners and those of weak resolve than others. Be kind, for all good lies in gentleness.

Strive to have a good relationship with your brethren and always ignore their errors, for only the elect amongst Allah's slaves is safe from making these errors. Speak to them about that which benefits them, rectifies their religion and about what they need in the afterlife and their worldly life. Do not discuss topics other than this with them, unless it intends to be friendly and sociable when this is required.

If someone harms you physically, abuses you verbally or says something wrong about you to others, do not respond by doing the same to them. You may pardon them and permit them to do what they have done without holding any resentment or hatred in your heart for them, and this is the behaviour of the righteous person [*siddiqun*], the people of immense truthfulness. Alternatively, you may entrust their affair to Allah and be content with Allah's support.

Renounce this worldly life with your heart, reduce your portion of it as far as you are able and do not make it one of your concerns. Do not desire any of its pleasures purely for the sake of gratification, for this is something which veils you from Allah.

Strive against your lower self until you remove from it any inclination for worldly pleasures. Let obscurity be more beloved to you than fame; let the absence of material possessions be more beloved to you than their presence and poverty be more precious to you than wealth. Let this be in your heart and let your inner secret truly attain this. Allah will then decree for you what He wishes concerning these states.

And beware of loving status, fame and reputation and loving to be revered and praised by people, for these things are deadly poison.

You must love and revere the people of the Prophetic Household [*Ahlul al-Bayt*]. Whenever someone manifests this out of truthfulness, Allah raises and honour him to the point where he may seem to be one of the people of the Prophetic Household. Every person will be with the one they love. One's love and reverence are not for them per se, but rather it

is for Allah and His Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him.

Hold fast to these counsels, continually revise their content and make doing so a regular act of devotion which you cannot do without. May Allah take care of your guidance and may He be with you, supporting you wherever you are. May He make you one of His slaves who has attained sincerity and success.

﴿وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

All praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds.

End of this Counsel

Allah's needy slave, Abdullāh bin Alawi al-Haddad Ba Alawi al-Hussaini, dictated these counsels on the eve of Monday 17th or 18th Ramadan 1079. These counsels were for one of his elect companions, the pious shaykh, the one who receives Allah's direct care, Abdullah bin Salih Ba Kathir. These counsels are for him individually and for our brothers, companions and all Muslims in general.

May Allah accept this and make it sincerely for His noble countenance.

﴿آمِينَ يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ آمِينَ﴾

Ameen, O Lord of the Worlds, Ameen.

Chapter Twenty-Four

A Counsel in a Letter to Shaykh Sufi Abdullah bin Sa'id Al-Amudi

I ask you by Allah to act always for Allah's sake, to travel to Allah inwardly and outwardly and to continuously call people to good. Acquaint people with Allah, and with the rights, He has over them, with kindness, gentleness and humility while lowering your wing to your brethren and avoiding harshness, coarseness and the tendencies of the lower self and blameworthy human nature.

Listen to what Allah Almighty says to His Beloved and His Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him,

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ.

“It is the Mercy of Allah that you deal gently with them. Were you severe or harsh hearted, they would surely have broken away from around you.”¹

Seek to attain the attributes of those who are beloved, so that perhaps you will be one of them in the sight of the one who is most Beloved, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him.

Be a sincere and absolute slave and then Allah's merciful assistance will pour upon you until it completely absorbs and overcomes

¹ Surah 3 Aali Imran Verse 159.

you. It will then pour forth upon those who love you and are physically close to you.

If someone shows arrogance, on the other hand, Allah will manifest Himself to that person with His attributes of domination and compulsion and this will pour forth upon those who are attached to him, and this is a divine manifestation which differs from the one previously mentioned.

May Allah bestow upon us and you the enabling grace that He gives upon His elite, those of whom He gently takes care and beautifully and generously nurtures.

End of this Counsel.

With Allah's Support and Enabling Grace.

May all praise be to Him.

Chapter Twenty-Five

Covenant and Investiture

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

﴿وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ﴾

There is neither might nor power except with the permission of Allah, the Most-High and Magnificent.”

All praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, Who ordered His believing slaves to assist each other in benevolence and be mindful of their duties to Him [*Taqwa*]. He described His pious slaves as being those who exhort one another to truth and exhort one another to patience in His clear Book. He, the Exalted says:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ.

“Help one another in righteousness and piety but not in sin and rancour.”¹

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ.

“Except those who have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and join together in the mutual teaching of Truth, and Patience and Constancy.”²

May Allah’s prayers and peace be upon our master Muhammad, the trustworthy Messenger and upon his good and pure family and his Companions who are rightly-guided and guides of others.

¹ Surah 5 Al-Maidah Verse 2.

² Surah 103 Al ‘Asr Verse 3.

To proceed, the enlightened one Sayyid Abu al-Wafa bin Muhammad Isa al-Wafai al-Misri, requested to take from me the covenant of companionship and to invest him with the blessed Sufi mantle. We granted his request due to his insistence and the presence of signs that he possesses a genuine desire to attain those things and follow this way.

The one who loves a people is one of them, and the one who resembles them or gathers with them is also one of them, by the bounty of Allah, the Generous, the Sovereign.

We have thus taken from him the covenant of companionship, and we have invested him with the blessed Sufi Alawi Prophetic mantle following that which has been narrated on the authority of the masters of this path, the leaders of this affair, the people of certainty and divine knowledge.

May Allah benefit and bless us by them and allow us to emulate them in the best way.

May He allow us to tread their noble path, will enable us to attain the knowledge and understanding of realities that they possess.

May He bring us together with them in the abode of His generosity:

مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا. ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا.

“are those in the company of whom is the Grace of Allah, of the prophets who teach, the sincere lovers of Truth, the martyrs, and the righteous and those who do good: Ah! What a beautiful fellowship! Such is the bounty from Allah: And sufficient is it that Allah knoweth all.”¹

This covenant or pledge and investiture [*al'iilbas*] took place on the great Day of Ashura, the tenth day of Muḥarram, the Month of Allah,

¹ Surah 4 An-Nisaa Verse 69-70.

at the beginning of the year 1107. May Allah bestow His care and concern upon it, make it sincerely for His sake and a means of attaining His love, proximity and pleasure and obedience

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ.

Say, “This is my way: I do invite you to Allah on evidence clear as the seeing with one’s eyes, I and whoever follows me. Glory to Allah! and never will I associate partners with Him!”¹

I then counsel myself, him and all our brethren who follow Allah’s religion and who are on the path to Allah to have *taqwa* of Allah, in private and in public and every state and every place:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ.

“For Allah is with those who are mindful of their duties and restrain themselves and those who do good.”²

I counsel myself and them to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, His decree [*Qadar*] whether it be good or bad, the Resurrection, that all people will be gathered in front of Allah, the Reckoning [*Hisab*], the Scales [*Mizan*], the Bridge [*Sirat*], the Pool [*Hawd*], Intercession [*Syafaa’*], Paradise [*Jannah*] and the Fire [*Nar*] and that the believers will see their Lord in Paradise.

I counsel myself and them to hold fast to the five prescribed prayers which are Midday [*Zuhr*], Afternoon [*Asr*], Dusk [*Maghrib*], Evening [*Isha*] and Dawn [*Fajr*] by doing the following: praying them in congregation, praying each prayer at the beginning of its time, praying with a heart that is present with Allah during it and praying in a state of submissiveness. The person praying must not think about anything other than what he is doing at that time. He thus reflects on what he is reciting of the Quran and seeks to understand the meaning and secrets contained

¹ Surah 12 Yusuf Verse 108.

² Surah 16 An-Nahl Verse 128.

in the words and actions of the prayer while standing, bowing, prostrating and sitting for therein are noble and subtle pearls of wisdom and secrets.

I counsel him to be consistent in performing the following prayers:

- The recommended, supererogatory [*nawafil*] prayers that legislated before and after the prescribed prayers.
- The *Witr* prayer. The complete method is to perform eleven prostrations [*raka'at*], but any number less than that, the minimum is three, that is appropriate to pray.
- The *Dhuha* prayer. The best is to pray eight *Raka'ats*, and the minimum is two and moderation are to pray four or six units.
- The prayer between *Maghrib* and *Isha*, which is known as *Ṣalatul Awwabin* or “the Prayer of Those Who Constantly Return to Allah”. The complete method is to perform twenty *Raka'ats* and the minimum is six. If someone wishes to pray twenty units, it is okay if they recite *Surah al-Ikhlās* three times in every *raka'at* after *Surah al-Fatihah*, for reciting *Surat al-Ikhlās* three times is equal to reciting the whole Quran and there is sufficient time to do so.
- Praying in the night has immense merit and a great station. One should thus be consistent in it and perform it in abundance with submissiveness, presence of heart and reflection, lengthening one's standing, bowing and prostration.

I counsel him to give whatever charity he can provide, even if it is only a little, for this is excellent in Allah's sight. That which is given seeking Allah's mighty countenance is not regarded as being a few. The Charity has a unique status in Allah's sight, especially if it is given to a poor person who is pious or a needy person who is virtuous. “In every moist ‘liver’ there is a reward.”¹

¹ In a Hadith in Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim an Arabic paraphrase meaning that the believer may be rewarded for the good he does to any human or animal.

I counsel him to fast in abundance, for fasting is a means of training the lower self, and it is one of the pillars of spiritual striving. Through fasting, one's 'lower self' [*nasf*] is disciplined, and one's physical desires are broken.

When he fasts, he should prevent his tongue and the rest of his body parts from falling into sin and engaging in that which is superfluous. He should ensure that he breaks his fast with food which is lawful.

He should be sure to fast on the days on which it is commendable to fast, such as the Day of Arafah, the Days of Ashura¹ and Tasu'a² and the six days of Syawwal. The best fast is to fast every other day and if the seeker can do this, he should. If he is not able to do so, he should fast on Monday, Thursday and Friday.

If this is not possible, he should fast three days every month and he should make his fast coincide with the "White Days"³, and this is the minimum level of fasting. It is light upon the lower self and has great merit, for the ḥadith mentions that it is equal to fasting the whole year.

I counsel myself and him to recite the Mighty Quran in abundance but also to reflect upon what is being recited, and to recite with the presence of heart and submissiveness and in a slow, measured way [*tartil*], avoiding haste and heedlessness.

I counsel myself and him to remember Allah in abundance, for remembrance is pivotal on the path to Allah, and the seeker is dependent upon it. He should repeat in abundance for it is Allah's fortress:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

"There is no deity save Allah."

When he remembers Allah, he should remember Him with his heart and tongue and with presence, focus, correct etiquette and

¹ The tenth day of Muharram.

² The ninth day of Muharram.

³ The "White Days" are the days which follow nights in which the moon is full namely the thirteenth fourteenth and fifteenth days of each lunar month.

submissiveness. If he does so, he will attain the fruits and inward and outward benefits of Allah's remembrance.

I counsel myself and him to have sincerity [*ikhlas*] in all his states, deeds and words; to trust fully in Allah, to surrender his affair to Allah, to rely upon Allah and to continually return to Allah.

I counsel myself and him not to be attached to this worldly life and to be content with a small number of worldly things: food, clothing, accommodation and other things. Let his state be that of a serious traveller on a long journey.

Let him only take what provision he needs to reach his destination. Let him not be attached to anything more than that and let him not seek or strive to attain that. His seeking and striving should be for his hereafter, for this is the true homeland and place of eternal rest.

I counsel myself, and I counsel him to humble himself to Allah and to show humility to Allah's believing slaves. His heart must be free and pure from envy, resentment or hatred towards any Muslim. He must love for the Muslims what he loves for himself and dislike for them what he dislikes for himself. He must show them good character and patiently bear any harm which comes from them. He must go further and pardon them if they harm or wrong him and pray for them. By doing this, people attained greatness and reached the stations of perfection.

He must avoid anger, for there is no good in it. It is entirely evil, unless it is anger for the sake of Allah, such as when things which Allah has made sacrosanct are violated or when Allah's obligations are ignored. People should become angry in these situations provided the situation demands this.

Chapter Twenty-Six

Routine Recitations & Remembrance

أُورَاد وَأَذْكَار

Awrad and Adhkar

Sayyid Abu al-Wafa' al-Misri, who was the reason behind the dictation and writing of these counsels, asked us to record some remembrance [*adhkar*] so that he may hold fast to them and recite them consistently. These are *adhkar* which we recite and advise our companions to recite. We have already written them in some of our counsels. They are as follows:

After each of the Five Prescribed [*Fardu*] Prayers recites the following twenty-five times each:

● اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ.

- “I seek the forgiveness of Allah, there is no deity save Him, the Living, the Sustainer, and I repent to Him.”

● سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ.

- “Transcendent is Allah; All Praise Belongs to Allah; There is no deity save Allah; Allah is Most Great; There is neither might nor power except with the permission of Allah, the Most-High and Magnificent.”

● سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ.

- “Transcendent is Allah and praise be to Him as He praises Himself, Transcendent is Allah, the Almighty.”

● اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَسَلِّمْ.

- “O Allah, bestow prayers and peace upon our Master Muhammad and the Family of Muhammad.”

Similarly after each prescribed prayers, recite the following three times:

● سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ ، عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ ، وَرِضَاءِ نَفْسِهِ ، وَزِينَةِ عَرْشِهِ ، وَمِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهِ.

- “Transcendent is Allah; All Praise Belongs to Allah; There is no deity save Allah; Allah is Most Great; There is neither might nor power except with the permission of Allah, the Most-High and Magnificent as many times as the number of His creations, and all His Spiritual Blessings, and all the beauty of His Throne and all His True Sayings.”

● سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ ، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ ، أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْكَ ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ أَنْ تُصَلِّيَ وَتُسَلِّمَ عَلَى عَبْدِكَ وَرَسُولِكَ ، سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ ، عَلَى آلِهِ ، أَفْضَلَ وَأَدْوَمَ مَا صَلَّيْتَ وَسَلَّمْتَ عَلَى أَحَدٍ مِنْ مَلَائِكَتِكَ وَأَنْبِيَائِكَ ، وَعِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ .

- Transcendent are You, O Allah, our Lord, and praise be to You as You praise Yourself. I bear witness that there is no deity save You. I seek Your forgiveness, and I repent to You. I ask You to bestow Your prayers and peace upon Your slave and messenger, our Master Muhammad and upon his family in a better and more continuous way than You have given them upon any of Your angels, prophets and pious slaves.

Also, after each prayer recites the “Prayer for Gentleness” once:

دُعَاءُ اللَّطْفِ

- يَا اللَّهُ يَا لَطِيفُ يَا رَزَّاقُ يَا قَوِيُّ يَا عَزِيزُ (ثلاث مرّة)
- “Allah, the Gentle Provider, the Most Powerful and Mighty (three times).
- أَسْأَلُكَ تَأْلَهَا إِلَيْكَ ، وَاسْتِعْرَاقًا قَيْكَ ، وَغَنَاءَ بِكَ عَمَّنْ سِوَاكَ ، وَلُطْفًا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ شَامِلًا جَلِيلًا وَخَفِيًّا ، وَرِزْقًا طَيِّبًا هَنِئًا مَرِيئًا ، وَقُوَّةً فِي الْإِيمَانِ وَالْيَقِينِ ، وَصَلَابَةً فِي الْحَقِّ وَالِدِّينِ وَعِزًّا بِكَ يَدُومُ وَيَتَحَلَّلُ وَشَرَفًا بَيِّقَى ، وَيَتَأَبَّدُ لَا يَشُوبُهُ تَكَبُّرٌ وَلَا عُتُوٌّ وَلَا إِرَادَةُ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا غُلُوٌّ إِنَّكَ سَمِيعٌ قَرِيبٌ مُجِيبٌ.
- I ask You for utter devotion to You, complete immersion in You and annihilation in You to the exclusion of everything other than You. I ask You for gentleness that is all-encompassing, manifest and hidden. I ask You for pure and wholesome provision. I ask You for strength in faith and certainty and firmness in defending the truth and the religion. I ask You for honour and nobility through You which remains for eternity, untainted by pride, arrogance or the desire to cause corruption or seek elevation upon the earth. Indeed, You are the All-Hearing, the Close, the One Who answers.”

Similarly to recite the “Prayer for Spiritual Strength” once after Subuh Prayer and the same for Asr Prayers,

دُعَاءُ الْإِمْدَادِ بِالْقُوَّةِ

● يَا اللَّهُ يَا رَبُّ يَا قَدِيرُ يَا قَوِيُّ يَا مَتِينُ (ثلاث مرّة)

- O Allah, O Lord, O Omnipotent, O Most Powerful, O Most Firm (three times).

● أَسْأَلُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ وَبِقُوَّتِكَ، أَنْ تُمِدَّنِي فِي جَمِيعِ قَوَائِي وَجَوَارِحِي الظَّاهِرَةِ

وَالْبَاطِنَةِ بِقُوَّةٍ مِنْ قُوَّتِكَ وَقُدْرَةٍ مِنْ قُدْرَتِكَ أَقْدِرُ بِهَا وَأَقْوَى بِهَا عَلَى

الْقِيَامِ بِمَا كَلَّفْتَنِي بِهِ مِنْ حُقُوقِ رُؤُوسِيَّتِكَ وَنَدَبْتَنِي إِلَيْهِ مِنْهَا فِيمَا بَنَيْتَ

وَبَيْنِكَ وَفِيمَا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ خَلْقِكَ وَعَلَى التَّمَتُّعِ بِكُلِّ مَا حَوَّلْتَنِي مِنْ نِعَمِكَ

الَّتِي أَبْحَثْتُهَا لِي فِي دِينِكَ وَيَكُونُ كُلُّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى أَصْلَحِ الْوُجُوهِ وَأَكْمَلِهَا

وَأَحْسَنَهَا وَأَفْضَلَهَا مَصْحُوبًا بِالْعَافِيَةِ وَالْقَبُولِ وَالرِّضَى مِنْكَ يَا أَرْحَمَ

الرَّاحِمِينَ

- I ask You, through Your ability and power, to bolster my inward and outward strength, giving me the ability and strength to perform the things which You have charged me to perform which pertain to the rights of Your Lordship; And to accomplish what You have encouraged me to achieve, whether this relates to my relationship with You or my relationship with Your creation; And to enjoy every one of the blessings that You have bestowed upon me, which You have made permissible to me in Your religion; And that all this be in the best, most beneficial and perfect way, accompanied by well-being, acceptance and Your good pleasure, O Most Merciful.

And also to recite the Ratib Al Haddad¹ after Isya prayers. It is well known which begins with the Surah Fatihah and ends with Surah 112 al-Ikhlās and concludes with Surah 113 al-Falaq and Surah 114 An-Nas and is mentioned in the narration.

Similarly, after each prescribed prayers to recite twenty-seven (27) times,

● اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

- “I seek forgiveness for the believers, male and female.”

A sheikh gave this to me and it is mentioned in the narration². It is a source of spiritual assistance and blessings.

Similarly, to seek forgiveness after Subuh and Asr Prayers twenty-five (25)³ times. It is well known and is mentioned in the narration.

● اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ، الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ ، رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي.

- I seek the forgiveness of Allah, there is no deity save Him, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful, the Living Who will never die, the Sustainer, and I repent to Him. My Lord, forgive me.

¹ The Ratib is a famous litany of prayers, invocations, reflections and remembrance which the Imam arranged. It consisting of phrases [*Hizb*] from the Quran and extracts from the Hadith. There is volumised Book ‘*Syarah Ratib*’ explaining the Ratib by the great grandson of the Imam, Habib Alwi bin Ahmad bin Hassan Al-Haddad. You also can get a copy of the Ratib online.

² Meaning either a Hadith of the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, as in this case, or a narration on the authority of one of the Companions or the Followers.

³ Some record mentioned twenty-seven (27) times.

The Seven Litanies

These are called al-Musabbia`at which were a gift from ‘al-Khadir’, peace be upon him, to Ibrahim al-Taymi, may Allah’s mercy be upon him. They are to be recited seven times before sunrise and sunset:

Surah 1 al-Fatihah Surah 112 al-Ikhlās Surah 113 al-Falaq
 Surah 114 An-Nas Surah 109 al-Kafirun Ayat al-Kursi

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ . ●

- “Transcendent is Allah; All Praise Belongs to Allah; There is no deity save Allah; Allah is Most Great; There is neither might nor power except with the permission of Allah, the Most-High and Magnificent.”

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَسَلِّمْ ●

- “O Allah, bestow prayers and peace upon our Master Muhammad and the Family of Muhammad.”

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ إِنَّكَ قَرِيبٌ مُجِيبُ الدَّعَوَاتِ . ●

- I seek forgiveness for myself, my parents and for the believers, male and female, and the Muslims, male and female, those who are alive and those who are dead, for indeed You are the One Who is Close and the One Who answers our prayers.

اللَّهُمَّ افْعَلْ بِي وَبِهِمْ ، عَاجِلًا وَآجِلًا فِي الدِّينِ وَالْدُنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ، مَا أَنْتَ لَهُ أَهْلٌ . وَلَا تَفْعَلْ بِنَا يَا مَوْلَانَا مَا نَحْنُ لَهُ أَهْلٌ ، إِنَّكَ عَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ، جَوَادٌ كَرِيمٌ ، رُؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ . ●

- Allah, treat them and me in a way that is fitting of You in the short and long term, in our religious and worldly affairs and the next life. Do not treat us, O Lord, as we deserve to be treated. Indeed You are Oft-Forgiving, Forbearing, Most Kind and Generous, Most Compassionate and Most Merciful.

The Ten Litanies

Imam al-Ghazali mentions these may Allah's mercy be upon him in his book 'The Beginning of Guidance' [*Bidayatul Hidayat*].

Recite each of the ten below ten times each in the morning and evening.

● لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ ، وَهُوَ حَيٌّ لَا يَمُوتُ بِيَدِهِ الْحَيَرُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ .

- There is no deity save Allah alone. He has no partners. To Him belongs the dominion and all praise. He gives life and death, and He is the Living who will never die. All good is in Allah's hand and He has power over all things.

● لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ .

- There is no deity save Allah, the King, the Truth, the One Who makes things manifest.

● لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفَّارُ .

- There is no deity save Allah, the One, the Dominator, Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them; the Mighty, the All-Forgiving.

● سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ .

- Transcendent is Allah; all praise belongs to Allah; there is no deity save Allah; Allah is Most Great; there is no strength or power save by Allah, the Most-High, the Almighty.

- سُبُّوحٌ قُدُّوسٌ رَبُّ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ.
- (He is) the Transcendent, the Glorified, Lord of the angels and the Spirit.
- سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ.
- Transcendent is Allah, the Almighty and praise be to Him as He praises Himself.
- أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ ، وَأَسْأَلُهُ التَّوْبَةَ وَالْمَغْفِرَةَ.
- I seek the forgiveness of Allah, there is no deity save Him, the Living, the Sustainer, and I repent to Him. I ask Him for repentance and forgiveness.
- اللَّهُمَّ لَا مَانِعَ لِمَا أَعْطَيْتَ، وَلَا مُعْطِيٍّ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ، وَلَا رَادَّ لِمَا قَضَيْتَ، وَلَا يَنْفَعُ ذَا الْجَدِّ مِنْكَ الْجَدُّ.
- Allah, no-one may prevent You from giving, and no-one may give if You wish to prevent them. No-one may overturn Your decree. A man's wealth is of no benefit to him in front of You.
- اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَسَلِّمْ.
- “O Allah, bestow prayers and peace upon our Master Muhammad and the Family of Muhammad.”
- بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ.
- In the Name of Allah. Nothing in the heavens and earth may harm the one who mentions His name. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.

After the *Sunnah* Witr prayer, recite:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ (أَرْبَعِينَ مَرَّةً)

“There is no deity save You. Transcendent are You. Truly I am amongst the wrongdoers”¹. (40 times)

After praying the two prostrations [*raka'ats*] *Sunnah* before *Fajr*, recite:

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ. (أَرْبَعِينَ مَرَّةً)

“O Living, O Sustainer, there is no deity save You”. (40 times)

The above is from a narration.

After the *Dhuha* Prayer, recite:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَتُبْ عَلَيَّ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ. (أَرْبَعِينَ مَرَّةً)

My Lord, forgive me and turn to me, indeed You are the Oft-Returning, the Most Merciful. (40 times)

After the *Zuhr* Prayer, recite:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ. (مِائَةً مَرَّةً)

There is no deity save Allah, the King, the Truth, the One Who makes things manifest. (100 times)

The above is also from a narration.

And also recite in the Morning and Evening:

جَزَى اللَّهُ عَنَّا مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ (عَشْرًا مَرَّةً)

May the best of Allah's rewards be upon our leader Muhammad on our behalf as he is worthy of being rewarded. (10 Times)

¹ Surah 21 Al-Anbiya Verse 87

Recite *Al-Wirdul Latiff*.

The *wird* is a selection of *adhkar* to be recited in the morning and evening which we compiled for our companions. It is comprehensive but concise and easy to read regularly. It is well known.

Wirdul Latiff is the last thing we wish to mention in this collection of counsels, named “The Letter of Counsel to be Honoured, for Abu al-Wafa’ and other pure brothers”.

The poor slave, Abdullah bin Alawi al-Haddad Ba’Alawi al-Hussaini finished dictating these counsels and may Allah make us benefit from him and his ways, Ameen.

It was completed on 4th Jumadil Awal, in the year 1107 of the Prophet’s Hijrah.

May the most bountiful of Allah’s blessings and peace be upon Muhammad and his family, his Companions and all those that follow them in excellence, from this day of ours until the Day of Recompense, by Your mercy, O Most Merciful.

﴿وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the Worlds

يَا لَهْفَ نَفْسِي عَلَى سِرِّ تُلُمْتُ بِهِ مِنِّْي الْعُلُومَ وَلَمْ تُبْلِغْهُ أَذْوَاقِي

Alas, all I have is grief over secrets I am aware of,

My knowledge encompasses them, but I have not tasted them.

إِنْ دَامَ هَذَا وَلَمْ أَحْظَ بِمَشْهَدِهِ مُتُّ بِغَمِّي وَأَحْزَانِي وَأَشْوَاقِي

If this continues and I do not witness them,

I will die out of sorrow, worry and longing.

سَارَ الرِّجَالُ وَنَالُوا كُلَّ مَا طَلَبُوا وَقَيَّدَتْنِي أَعْمَالِي وَأَخْلَاقِي

The great ones went on their way and attained all that they wished,
while my actions and attributes shackled me.